

BRITISH FOREIGN POLICY

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By

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FOREWORD

This is not a historical study. Its main concern, on the contrary, is with the present and the future, which are problematic enough. But I have tried to give it a background of history, painted in with a very large brush, because all understanding between the peoples of Western and Eastern Europe depends upon some adequate knowledge of the legacies of the past. So also does all understanding between the Old World and the New. None of the problems to be solved, such as the right relation between greater and smaller Powers, between the British Commonwealth and the United States, or between the nations of the British Commonwealth itself, can be rightly appraised or tackled without a genuine comprehension of the main lines of their history.

We do not live in a purely scientific world. If we did, there would be neither war nor want in it. It is a world of men and women imperfectly associated and organized, in which the nations know less of each other than is to be desired, and in which, moreover, their genius and character, deriving from race and history, have moulded events, at least as much as, and often very much more than, geographical and economic facts.

The mind of man is more important than the material universe. The peoples of Athens and Rome, though influenced like all others by their position and environment, were insignificant in number by comparison with their achievement and influence. England too has played a part out of all proportion to the size of her population for many centuries past. In the time of Marlborough, she had only one third the population of France, in the time of Napoleon only one half; and though she more than trebled her strength in the next hundred years and sent many millions oversea, she has remained very small in numbers by comparison with her responsibilities and her political and economic influence. At the present moment the disproportion between the size of her population and the part she has to play in the world is even more pronounced; and it is only by quality in all sections of her people that she can meet the test.

The most important of her tasks is to harmonize the old World and the New, since she is the strongest existing link be-

tween them with close affiliations to both. It is not an easy task, because her position in Europe is not fully realized by the other nations of the British Commonwealth and still less by the United States. That young and vigorous extra-European but, nevertheless Western World consists in the main of peoples who have turned their backs upon the past. Their ancestors, immediate or remote, were driven oversea by Europe's hatreds, persecutions and reactionary laws, or else by a sense of adventure which spurred them to escape from insufficient livelihoods and lack of scope. The instinct of isolation is therefore very strong in them, and they look upon the welter of Europe with profound distrust.

My sympathies are all with the New World—its energy, its promise, its abounding hope. But none of its aspirations will mature, if its democracies refuse to realize that in Europe and their relation with it lies the way to future peace. The New World cannot continue to ignore the Old, if either is to avoid another holocaust. The stronger the influence of the New upon the Old, the better for both; the greater the isolation of the New from the Old, the worse for both. Both the World Wars in which the New has been involved have sprung from the Old, and humanity will be dragged remorselessly into a third, if New and Old cannot now co-operate. The interdependence of nations is an inescapable fact, and so, broadly speaking, is the interdependence of continents.

Nationalism in the democratic form which is to all the English-speaking peoples the very breath of life has therefore reached a turning point, and it must justify itself towards other peoples if it is to continue to exist. Neither Britain nor the other nations of the British Commonwealth nor yet the United States will survive as free democracies if their great influence is not combined to heal the discords of Europe and keep it at peace. It is their common civilization born in Western Europe and bound to share in Western Europe's destiny which is now at stake.

But wisdom in this great matter demands some knowledge of the past. Experience at a series of international conferences after the last war brought that truth home to me with unforgettable force; and it is, I hope, possible to put the main problem in broad perspective without oversimplifying it. My only claim to attention is that I have spent much time between the two Worlds, Old and New, in the course of a wandering life.

CHAPTER I

THE CENTRAL FLAW IN THE TWENTY YEARS' TRUCE

The first impressions I would try to convey are derived from an experience more than twenty years old, which has remained most vivid ever since. As it happens, I was present at practically all the international conferences of the years 1921 and 1922, when the wartime alliance of Western Powers was already dissolving in a mist of illusion and mutual distrust. Following so close upon their union and victory in war, the early rift between them presents a warning which we should not now neglect; and I have often looked back upon the discussions of that period, wondering what in fact were the flaws in the 1919 settlement which wrecked it as a basis of enduring peace. We all worked hard enough, pulling against the collar and clinging to our faith; but I find it impossible in retrospect to evade a grim conviction that even by that date, within but three or four years of a struggle which had bound them very close, the major Allies had already abandoned themselves to courses which were bound to end, if they remained unchecked, in the ruin of their common ideals and hopes.

The worst, as I see it now, arose from one central and incontrovertible fact. Britain had even by then discarded her military strength. The United States had turned its back upon Europe. Inevitably there came of this an overburdening of France. The effects were not immediately manifest, since for a time France seemed to dominate the continent; but they underlay a misleading surface and proved fatal in due course. Here, I am now convinced, was the central flaw that wrecked the dam so carefully erected to stem the waters of strife.

Credentials

Before I examine it in detail, let me assure my readers that I am far from claiming a foresight in 1921 and 1922 which I did not at that time possess. My sole title to expatiate upon the

international problems of the hour is derived from afterthought upon the firsthand and fairly wide experience which I gained at that date.

The most enlightening part of it, so far as Europe is concerned, came my way as private secretary in 1921 and 1922 to Mr. Lloyd George, responsible for serving him in one branch only of his vast responsibilities, namely, Imperial and Foreign affairs. When I joined his staff in April, 1921 (succeeding the late Lord Lothian, who had been with him through most of his historic premiership) Mr. Lloyd George had already passed the apex of his period of power and was handicapped at every turn by growing dissension in his Cabinet and in Parliament. He struggled with extraordinary vitality and resource for two main objects during the next eighteen months. One was a settlement of the tangled problem caused by the demand for money reparation from Germany and payment of inter-Allied debts. Europe's economic future turned largely on those two points. The other was the problem of European security, confused beyond all measure by the collapse of the Anglo-American guarantee of the eastern frontier of France. He sought untiringly for some acceptable solution of those two problems and failed completely in both, but not by his own fault. His Ministry was undermined by the defection of a group of his Conservative colleagues in October, 1922, and he resigned office, never to return to it. The causes were domestic, due partly to wide political and social disquiet, and partly to methods of procedure peculiar to himself, which many of his colleagues profoundly disliked. These lay outside my sphere of work and do not concern me here, except that the rising acrimony of party feeling at home had a disastrous effect upon his authority abroad and upon Britain's international influence.

The first important gathering which I attended was the Imperial Conference of 1921, which sat for two months in that summer and decided, amongst other far-reaching things, not to renew the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. The other gatherings were international; some, comprehensive meetings of the Powers both small and great; some, special colloquies with France. My duties were to master as best I could the myriad international questions which came into debate; to draft both private and official memoranda; to keep in touch with foreign statesmen and their staffs, listening to the personal observations with which they favoured me and trying to weigh them up; and finally to

help my chief with the best appreciation I could manage of the towering difficulties which beset him in his task.

Lord Curzon was Foreign Secretary for most of that period, and overwhelmed me with much private exhortation which he seemed unable to bestow upon the Prime Minister himself. But I had a better guide and mentor in Sir Eyre Crowe, the Permanent Under-Secretary to the Foreign Office. He did not often attend a conference, but he had an unrivalled fund of diplomatic experience and lucid commonsense, reading Europe like an open book. His teaching was invaluable, and I shall always think of him with affection and reverence. For the rest, I had travelled considerably before the war, both in Europe and in the world at large, partly as a private wanderer, partly as a newspaper correspondent, and partly for a critical period (in 1910-11) as Imperial and Foreign Editor of *The Times*. "*Il est toujours bon d'avoir été journaliste*," said a great member of that wide fraternity, Monsieur Clemenceau, "*pourvu*," he added, "*qu'on s'en débarrasse*."—"It is always a good thing to have been a journalist, provided you do not stay too long at it." The kind of knowledge it gives varies from man to man; and I can only say that travel in that form, followed by four years service in the Army and later by a fairly wide range of political and Parliamentary experience, taught me the little I can claim to know about the nations of this earth.

I hope I may be forgiven for this autobiographical note. The world is over-full of books about its problems, and I think it right that anyone who presumes to add to their number should give his readers his credentials, for what they may be worth.

And so, back to the world of 1921 and 1922, which sowed the dragon's teeth.

The Overburdening of France

One point, in retrospect, stands out very clear. It is that Britain and the United States misjudged the problem of Germany. President Wilson would come to no terms with Germany until she had adopted a nominally democratic form of government. When she did this overnight, he seemed to be satisfied that militarism in Germany was at an end. Britain was less confiding in the first twelve months of peace, but public opinion thereafter changed rapidly from anger and distrust to compassion and tolerance. Both Powers had begun by giving France a joint

guarantee of her eastern frontiers, to last until the League of Nations might be regarded as adequate security. That guarantee lapsed when the Senate of the United States refused to ratify the Treaty of Versailles; and though Britain offered to renew it single-handed at the Cannes Conference in the last days of 1921, France had by then lost confidence in both her partners as military factors in European peace, and she preferred to pursue her own course by undertaking a futile occupation of the Ruhr and by ringing Germany with an Entente of smaller Powers under her own leadership.

It is not necessary to retrace in detail the story of the ensuing years. The main point is that France was not equal either in spirit or in military strength to the task of keeping Europe at peace, and that neither Britain nor the United States (the only Powers which had the necessary resources) was ready to prevent German expansion and rearmament. To insist too much upon the circumstances which attended each successive step is to misread the broader truth. Europe needs an equilibrium in order to remain at peace, and any such equilibrium depends upon the energy and character of the nations composing it as well as on their material strength. Germany, controlled once more by the Prussian military caste, which for its own ends brought Hitler into the German Chancery, was the strongest potential force in Europe from the moment the union of the Western Allies broke down, and neither France nor her ring of minor States was equal to holding Germany in check without the firm support of Britain and the United States, who might have formed an effective western counterweight to Germany's rising strength.

A French Soldier's View

There were foreseeing men in France, including Clemenceau, who feared from the outset that the Western Allies had thrown away all lasting security for peace. Two years before the Imperial Conference of 1921, when the summer of 1919 was still young, the Brigade of Guards sent six of its old officers to receive an embroidered tricolor banner from the citizens of Maubeuge, which the Guards Division had entered two days before the Armistice. The banner bore the legend, "*A la Garde Britannique Maubeuge Reconnaissante.*" I was one of the British officers sent out and recall the whole visit very vividly.

At the main dinner given to us I sat next a French General who had greatly distinguished himself and risen remarkably young to high command. The Peace Conference was still sitting in Paris, but the general character of its proceedings was clearly known. My French neighbour at dinner discussed them with a gloomy resignation; he thought even then that the war had been fought in vain. Did he suppose, I asked, that France would be fighting Germany once more in the course of his lifetime? The question surprised him. "*Mais naturellement!*", he replied.

I am bound to confess that at the time I thought such pessimism absurd. Where is he now? I do not know. And where will my own countrymen of the next generation be, if they do not take the problem of Europe more seriously than all of us, young and old, were prepared to do after 1918?

Britain and France

There is no use in recrimination or in trying to estimate which nation was most responsible and what mistakes each made. France herself took from 1918 onwards an unhistorical view of the war which her Allies no less than she had won, giving history books to her schools which claimed the whole victory for French arms, with little acknowledgment to the United States for its aid and practically none to the British Commonwealth. She was blind and obstinate in her demand for money reparations from Germany, which could not be paid except at British and American expense. Having lost faith in her war Allies, she turned to tortuous and factious courses, thinking apparently to change their attitude towards her by the trouble which she caused. There was, moreover, a disease of the whole body politic in France which spread corruption into every branch of her public and business life. Even the soldiers nominated to the highest places were politicians who bemused themselves and others with an utterly false appreciation of the changing needs of their time and assured their British colleagues that a handful of divisions with meagre support from the air would suffice to turn the scale between a tired people of 40 millions and a virile one of nearly twice that number, bent on straightening the score. The Maginot Line itself was the acme of delusion, founded on a fatal military doctrine and even so reaching but halfway to the sea. No wonder that when at length the blow fell, the French nation was stunned and impotent.

Certainly no one who loves France greatly, as I do, and knew her public men of all descriptions between the two wars can acquit them of complicity in the sordid struggle between individuals, groups and interests which destroyed her national spirit and brought about her decline. The exceptions shone like beacons in a naughty world, but they were far too few to dispel the general gloom. It is an amazing fact that even in the spring of 1940 the French Government and General Staff were still assuring Britain that the exiguous forces she had sent to France were all that France required.

None of these considerations, however, relieves her British ally of its large share of responsibility for the catastrophe of that year. It is the business of national leaders to know the world as it is and not as it is painted by other national leaders who may have other ends to serve. Britain's diplomatic representatives abroad were at no time out of touch with realities as British Cabinet Ministers were, but their testimony was for the most part waved aside. It has long been an essential condition of peace in Europe that Britain and France should work together in genuine accord; and it will not be less so after victory in this second war. Britain is the stronger of the two, and she went fatally astray in leaving France to bear the major burden of security against Germany after 1919 alone.

The lack of understanding between France and Britain, begun in 1919, was never really cured; for the cracks were merely papered by the Locarno Agreements of 1926, and that paper showed its flimsiness the moment Germany started openly to re-arm. But there were other flaws in the Twenty Years' Truce which point an equally impressive moral for the settlement ahead. To one of these I now come.

CHAPTER II

ANOTHER DISASTROUS FLAW

The Russia of 1944 is not the Russia of the early years of revolution nor comparable to the riven and exhausted country which faded out of the first World War. But ostracism of Russia will always be a danger to the peace of Europe so long as Germany remains what she is; and it was one of the main factors

which made France's burden increasingly intolerable from 1919 on. For Russia is one of the indispensable checks upon Germany's dreams of world dominance, and it was not by any means her fault alone that she played so ambiguous a part in the final stages of the crisis which brought the Twenty Years' Truce to an end. The red light in Eastern Europe was never so dangerous to other countries' security from revolution as to their security from war ; and if anything was more ominous of trouble than the overburdening of France after 1919, it was the lack of Russian participation in the diplomatic arrangements designed to keep Germany disarmed.

Britain's dealings with Russia have not been uniformly wise. She could not have prevented the domination of Europe by Napoleonic France without the aid of Russian power, and the fear of Russia which coloured her Middle Eastern and Eastern policy during the nineteenth century produced a sequence of events, including war, of which she has little reason to be proud. Russian imperialism was one of the bogeys of that time ; and if we want peace in Europe, we must guard against its becoming so again. Neither Tsarism nor Sovietism accords by nature with our own way of life ; but Britain and Russia have major interests in common, including the need for watch on Germany, which make them natural allies in European affairs. It was unfortunate that the universal fear of Communism obscured that patent truth in the fateful years dividing 1919 from 1939. ☺

Bismarck, the sagest statesman whom Germany has produced, warned the German people against the danger of simultaneous war upon their eastern and western fronts. His successors were less foreseeing, when the hard old pilot was dropped ; and it can hardly be questioned that the Russian armies saved western civilization from a German victory between 1914 and 1917. It was Russia that queered the German onset upon France in the first months of that war, Russia that gained time for the British Empire to mobilize its strength before France was overwhelmed and Russia's defection in 1917 that enabled Germany to concentrate upon the western front with almost decisive effect in the following spring. Russia has always lived aloof in some important respects from the rest of the European family ; she has indeed a history and a culture different from theirs and markedly her own. But the history of Western Europe would have been different indeed if Russia from her eastern fastness had never intervened.

The Ostracism of Russia

In the first elation of the Twenty Years' Truce Russia and Germany were both regarded as outlaws by the victorious West—Russia as a hot-bed of revolution, and Germany as a hot-bed of war. But the fear of Russian Communism rapidly outdistanced the fear of German militarism, and Germany came to be regarded in many quarters as one of Europe's essential safeguards against revolutionary ideas. For this the fanatics of the Soviet Revolution were themselves in part to blame. They preached revolution as a universal cure for all humanity's ills, and they practised subversive activities throughout the world in blank defiance of the vital international principle that the institutions under which any country chooses to live are its own domestic affair. The first Labour Government to take office in Britain suffered defeat by its alleged subservience to Communist influence. In 1923 a letter was published from Zinoviev, a Soviet leader, which seemed to show that Communist agencies were interfering in this country's domestic business. It may or may not have been important in itself, but there is no doubt at all that Russian propaganda in Britain was neither correct nor friendly nor wise. For my part, therefore, I suffer no regret for the liquidation of Zinoviev and his compeers by Stalin three years before the outbreak of this war.

It was none the less unhappy for European peace that Russia and Germany came together for mutual service when Lenin abandoned Communism and launched the New Economic Policy in 1921. The Treaty of Rapallo between them was signed in the face of the European Conference at Genoa on Easter Day, 1922. Russia certainly had much to gain from German tuition in the industrial field, and Germany found in Russia much of the help she needed in laying the first tentative foundations of her subsequent rearmament. But when Stalin secured control over Russian development in 1927, *Mein Kampf* had been available to Germany's neighbours for three years, and it loomed over Russia like a black sign in the western heavens when Hitler was made Chancellor by Hindenburg in 1933.

Russia After 1933

The revolution which it produced in Russian foreign policy should have been better understood by the western Powers. The Soviet Government joined the League of Nations in 1934.

Inspired doubtless by Stalin but very ably handled by Litvinov at Geneva and elsewhere, her principal preoccupation became the "indivisibility of peace." Undoubtedly she felt the need of reaching a stable understanding with Germany's western neighbours, and more particularly with Britain and France; but though her outlawry had been cancelled by official recognition (partial at first and at intervals withdrawn, but finally complete), German propaganda worked the scarecrow of Communism which it was Germany's sacred mission to suppress with tireless energy and lamentable success. The danger of contact with the Soviet Government overshadowed the far more actual danger of disregarding German militarism which menaced all the civilized Powers.

The Munich crisis of 1938 revealed the consequences with the lightning-flash which presages a storm. Russia, for all her vital interest in its outcome, was not invited to attend. France without a powerful partner on Germany's eastern frontiers felt unequal to her engagements and abandoned her weak ally. Britain, though not bound by any specific engagement, might have turned the scale; she could assuredly have done so, had Russia then been at her side. But she could not count on support from the other nations of the Commonwealth, and she was conscious of a military unpreparedness which time alone could repair. Czechoslovakia was therefore dismembered, and it became inevitable that all the weaker States that could do so should cling to blind neutrality, despite the League of Nations and its Covenant, when Germany flung down her final challenge to Poland and her friends.

There was, indeed, one way still left, and only one, by which peace might have been sustained. It was the conclusion of a full-fledged military alliance between Russia and the two main western Powers. Britain's guarantee to Poland and Rumania, given in the spring of 1939, could be of no immediate value without Russian military support. Negotiations were indeed undertaken for that purpose with Russia, and I shall discuss in a later chapter Russia's decision to gain time by choosing an agreement with Germany in preference to an agreement with her present Allies. The single chance of peace was thrown away, because, even then, fear of the Communist colossus, cynically exploited by Germany, darkened counsel in London and Paris and convinced the Soviet Government that Munich might not be the last of the surrenders to which they would submit.

Russia and the Peace of Europe

There can surely be no proof more luridly convincing than what has since occurred that a stable equilibrium cannot be maintained in Europe without a solid understanding between Russia, Britain, France and the other peace-loving Powers. The failure of London and Paris to act in candid concert with Russia even after she had joined the League added gravely to the overburdening of France which began in 1919. It is difficult to conceive of any consequences which might have flowed from collaboration with her equal to the ruin of long-established things wrought by total war ; but there were many both in France and England who thought of Soviet influence as a greater danger than German lust for land and power to swell the Master Race. The breach thus made in European security may only too easily be started once again ; for German propaganda is inveterate. I, therefore, make no apology for devoting my next chapters to a comparison of Germany and Russia as forces in the civilization which we are struggling to uplift.

Nothing will be of greater moment to all the English-speaking democracies than clearness upon that issue, which will assuredly present itself anew in the post-war world. Engine-drivers who misread the signals are dangerous on railways but worse in international affairs ; and it is due to Mr. Lloyd George to say that from the outset he feared the consequences of the ostracism of Russia by what revolutionaries call the Bourgeois Powers. Certain it is that he saw the red light at Rapallo in 1922 and strove consistently thereafter with the great authority that he retained to bring Russia back into the peace-abiding circle of the western States.

It was perhaps permissible to believe in European stability without the weight of Russia while Germany was still disarmed ; but from the moment German rearmament began Russia's support was indispensable if the new challenge was to be stemmed. For Russia, as I shall try to show, has never been out of line with the civilization of Western Europe despite the long period of isolation in which she matured, whereas Germany under Prussian leadership has twice imperilled that growth of many centuries and will destroy it completely, if allowed another chance.

CHAPTER III

THE MORAL FOR 1944

The two great flaws in the Twenty Years' Truce which I have tried to describe are in my belief the main reason why within so short a time German militarism was allowed a second chance. Germany will be defeated again for one reason only—that her leaders once more departed from Bismarck's sage advice. Hitler no doubt flung himself upon Russia because he believed that the United States would not enter the war of its own volition and that Britain was reduced to impotence. That in itself was fortunate enough for us ; Russia, completely transformed since 1918, compensated and more than compensated for the collapse of France. But that was not all. Another militarist and Fascist Power, Japan, considered that the moment had come to challenge not only Britain but the United States. Pearl Harbour brought the American democracy into a complete war alliance with us, and we are now the middle term of a Triple Alliance with such resources and fighting power that Germany has lost her second chance. But our second victory will not be more conclusive than the first, if we fail to guard its fruits for many years to come against recurrence of our previous mistakes.

We shall not maintain an effective guard on Germany merely by proclaiming, as we did so ardently before, that our policy is peace. We ought to know by now that moral fervour will never equalize the Umbrella and the Sword in the scale of values which Germany respects. Peace in itself is not a policy, though we spoke for years as if we thought it so. It is a star to which our waggon will always be hitched ; but our policy will betray our dreams, if it has no aim or method more precise than the pursuit of peace. Everything depends upon the kind of peace which we desire, the danger by which it is menaced, and the soundness of our policy in neutralizing that danger at its source. The fact that we declared war upon Germany of our own volition in 1939 proves that peace is not in itself our *summum bonum*, whatever its nature and however great the price.

Arrangements to prevent aggression will never in fact prevent it if they remain uncertain while aggression perfects its instru-

ments. For aggression takes many forms, springing as it does from the desire of a nation to impose its will upon other nations ; and it seldom abandons the field of diplomatic and commercial pressure for that of actual war until it has achieved a strategic position which gives its arms a superior fighting chance. Those who want peace must therefore determine clearly where the seed of war is most likely to sprout, and they must be prepared to stifle it before it has time for growth. Arrangements such as the Locarno Agreement of 1926, which not only guaranteed France against Germany but also Germany against France, can never achieve that result ; nor indeed can any other arrangement which postulates uncertainty until aggression has actually taken place.

An American Comment

The moral for Britain is surely beyond doubt. Nazism and Fascism make war inevitable because they preach it as the highest activity within reach of the human race. They are therefore in their very nature a challenge to civilization which must be rooted out. That cannot be done in a day, since the roots go very deep. The tree will infallibly grow again, if all we do is to level it to the ground and forget that the roots still exist. I am therefore in profound agreement with Mr. Walter Winchell, who tackles the subject in his racy idiom thus :—

"Students in schools and colleges must be educated to the facts of international life. Ignorance is the weapon of tyranny ; intelligence is the shield of democracy. Appeasement and isolation are only the result of stupidity.

"The pipe-dream oratory of the ostriches is valuable for one reason : it can teach future Americans what not to do and how to recognise spurious ideas, if their minds are flogged with it again. If Yankee-Doodlers of to-morrow don't learn that grim lesson, they will only have to pay for their ignorance with their lives.

"In any part of the world whenever Fascism starts to crawl it must be stopped in its tracks. Whether the poison starts to flow in New York, or Boston, or in a strange city in a far-off land, an antiseptic must be applied pronto. The time to do something about the enemies of liberty is when they're still on soapboxes instead of waiting until they have the planes to bomb their targets.

"Our military forces should never again be allowed to rust. Our muscles must be in fighting trim at all times. The Air Age has shrunk the globe. To-morrow's Pearl Harbour could be New York, Chicago, Los Angeles or a town in Montana.

"The cost of security will be high, but the cost of insecurity is higher—not only in dollars but in something more priceless : The lives of American youth."

Admirable sense. But what does it mean in terms of an international policy capable of rooting Fascism out?

Matthew Arnold's *Notebooks* are a typical example of the difficulty which besets enlightened minds in an age of benevolent but rambling thought. He was an inspector of schools, and his duties as such furnished him with a modicum of daily work. But he was much more—a poet, a critic, a thinker anxious to improve the quality of contemporary life; and his notebooks show him constantly confronted with the difficulty of shaping and giving an effective edge to the molten metal in his mind, of fixing on some definite, practical aim and then achieving it. Ever and again therefore we find him writing down a maxim which he had drawn from some classical source—*semper aliquid certi proponendum est*, “always have some definite purpose” for the day, or the month, or the year, or the rest of your life.

That is a maxim which we at this time should take to heart. The Triple Alliance of Britain, Russia and the United States is not an exclusive alliance; it heads a solid front of United Nations of many different types. It has its internal weaknesses, as every alliance has; but in this war it will do its work. Why? Not only because it has superior resources, though these are indispensable. The owner of a hammer, however powerful, must choose his nail and hit it on the head, if the hammer is to be of use.

In war the choice is simple; our purpose is to defeat our enemies, and we concentrate on that. But peace is a different matter. Even the three main Powers, let alone the Grand Alliance as a whole, have different views and interests. National standpoints (working sometimes at cross-purposes within the bosom of a single State), idealistic visions, commercial aims, dislike of obligation, political calculation, pride of independence or fear of some supposed superior sagacity in the conduct of other States—all these things and many others confuse the counsels of the war brotherhood and divide it on what should be its united purpose of saving the world from another holocaust.

There is always unhappily an easy escape from the pain of making purpose definite. It is to talk of Peace with a capital “P” without sufficient attention to the source from which it is most likely to be menaced or to the concrete obligations necessary for damming that source. World Organization for the Maintenance of Peace is a blessed refuge for all Powers, small and great, but more especially the great. The latter are like rich

men who subscribe to hospitals and to the Charity Organization Society, leaving the real problems of poverty to work themselves out.

The method suits every one to whom the danger of poverty (or war) seems once again remote; and in the international world it has one supreme and supposedly sovereign advantage, that the greater Powers cannot be accused of wishing to dominate the smaller ones, while the smaller ones escape from the necessity of deciding with which amongst the greater their lot may most wisely be cast. Canada echoed early this year with wisdom of that character, in reaction to a speech made in Toronto by Lord Halifax.

Mr. Winchell is nevertheless indisputably right. If war is to be avoided, we must fix upon the source or sources from which it is most likely to spring and keep that source or those sources squarely and effectively blocked. That will not be done by generalizing both the danger and the responsibility for holding it in check. If one thing more than another is certain to produce another war, it is to rely for its avoidance upon a World Organization for the Maintenance of Peace which rests content with an equal and universal obligation to resist aggression in the abstract, without name or place. No peace system which does no more than bind every nation to support every other nation against aggression, however remote, when aggression has already got a start will ever deter a cunning aggressor from undermining peace.

No one can justly say that British statesmanship lacked idealism between 1919 and 1939. Its weakness was too much complacency, and much too little realism, in the minds of Ministers, in their presentation of our problems to the people, and in the people as a whole. We wished to be high-principled and beneficent, but also at our ease; to march without discomfort for the sunrise, unconscious of the painful fact that loftiness of purpose will never make flabby muscles and carpet-slippers equal to the task of climbing an Alpine peak. Let us therefore understand this time that nothing is more certain to produce flabbiness of muscle and the carpet-slipper mood than vague reliance upon that Universal Remedy, which claims such sure efficiency and is so delightfully cheap—I mean, of course, the patent nostrum of World Organization for the Maintenance of Peace, which diffuses responsibility for action so widely that none can know or prepare to meet his share of the heavy cost.

German Propaganda

There are two marked features of the 1919-1939 world which are faithfully coming into prominence again as the unity and realism enforced by war begin to lose effect. One is the power of German propaganda, always intent on dividing the other great Powers and inveterate in its attacks on British leadership. The other is a revival of the tendency in western civilization outside Europe to believe that it has no direct concern in Britain's first and foremost necessity—that of keeping Europe at peace.

If any doubt what German propaganda can achieve, let them read a book by a candid German upon the Twenty Years' Truce, Leopold Schwarzschild's *World in Trance*.¹ Hitler has better reason to understand it than anyone else, and he is still pursuing it with inveterate hope. Others will take on his mantle when he passes from the scene. So let us mark what he is saying to-day; to-morrow and to-morrow will give us more and more from the same fount.

January 30th of this year, 1944, was the eleventh anniversary of Hitler's assumption of power. He marked it by a deliverance, addressed to an inanimate microphone in the stillness of some room. His main theme—as usual since September, 1939—was the wickedness of England. Germany's cause, he said, was the cause of European civilization. Should England win the war with Russia as her principal European ally, that cause, and England with it, would perish for all time. Germany therefore was still its one and only hope; Russia its ruthless oriental enemy. "Whatever the outcome of this war, England has lost her position upon the continent."

This *herrenvolkisch* view of European destiny has become familiar in German utterances; and its motives are obvious enough. The nations which stand for European civilization have their doubts of Soviet Russia, and these may even yet be played upon to serve the German game. Practically all of them, from Oslo to Paris, Athens and Bukarest, are looking anxiously to Britain and the United States. They do not want a domination of any kind; they want as nations to be able to call their souls their own, to shape their destinies in their own way. They want, in fact, a balance of power, an equilibrium, to guarantee both freedom and security from war. And England must be the keystone of that arch in Western Europe, if it is to be rebuilt.

¹ Published in English by Hamish Hamilton, 1943.

The Germans tell the European nations that they will look in vain to England to play the keystone part. She cares not who goes down, so long as she herself survives. Her record has always been the same. Its hall-marks are selfishness, cynicism and unreliability; and those who put their faith in her are invariably deceived. Georg Schröder, for instance, the chief correspondent of the German overseas news agency, points out with much insistence that "the case of Poland has proved the worthlessness of British promises of assistance," and is still proving it at this hour.

Useless, they also assert, to hope for any help from Britain's conception of the balance of power. "This," says Hitler, in the same January broadcast, "is only another of those wars which Britain has incited time and again for the sake of maintaining the so-called balance of power in Europe and for the sake of her Empire." England's foreign policy, according to Hitler, has always battered upon the foolish willingness of European nations to fight each other for her selfish ends. But that game, he declares, is up. The issue of Europe's future lies between Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia. Whoever wins the war, Britain has lost all power of buttressing European peace.

The true moral is, of course, the opposite. Without a Britain able and ready to play a decisive part as a European Power, Western Europe will be leaderless. Russia in that case could hardly do other than make strong her western frontiers, at whatever cost to her smaller neighbours, and leave the rest of Europe to deal with seventy million Germans as best it can. Let that but happen, and the road will open hopefully for Germany's third chance. It is Europe that will produce another world-war in this century, if time cannot be made for the cult of Nazism ingrained in the youth and strength of Germany to work itself out; and Britain herself will be lost, if militarism maintains its hold over the soul of the great German race.

Europe, let us make no mistake about it, will hold the keys of peace and war for a generation at least to come. Britain, it is true, is the European member of a family of nations whose domestic interests all lie afar from European shores; and she can never act effectively without their moral backing. But their peace no less than hers will turn upon events in Europe during the next few formative years. If therefore Britain depends in no small measure on them, they also depend on her. She is still by far the strongest member of the family, and she is nearest the storm-centre from which the world's worst troubles in the

rest of this century will come. For both those reasons her European policy is crucial for the whole family, whose fortunes are largely in her hands. The problem of peace is for this century an European problem, and British policy or impolicy will be the decisive factor in it.

Britain and the World

Not that Britain can ever afford to confine her interests to her own continent. For her that would spell moral abdication and suicide. It would also be very bad for the rest of the world. She is herself so placed and constituted that she is even more dependent than other nations on political and economic conditions throughout the globe ; and she is still the heart of a political system which could not crumble without involving the peace of other nations in its fall. Her Commonwealth and Empire lies in all the continents. It is dovetailed at a hundred different points into the life of other peoples, and its coherence is essential to the peace and welfare of all.

This is not an over-riding system such as the Roman Empire was from Hadrian's wall in Britain to North Africa and the Middle East. The modern world will look for order and individual freedom to two other great systems as well, Soviet Russia and the United States of America ; and China will constitute a fourth great system in the fullness of time.

But Britain is by her very nature less self-sufficient than the other great Powers, and she also bears in her Commonwealth and Empire a responsibility more difficult and complex than theirs. While, then, her very existence depends upon her efficiency as a European Power, her foreign policy must care for the security and welfare of all parts of the King's world-wide realm, and it has perforce to ensure the food and material sustenance which she needs to draw from all quarters of the earth.

She must therefore make a decisive choice of Europe as her first responsibility, not only for her own but for others' sake. She failed to do this after 1919, and in the Imperial Conference of 1921 I saw the process at work. Since it may only too easily be repeated, I will quote an outstanding example of what took place. Here, for instance, is what General Smuts said about British foreign policy at the Imperial Conference of 1921 :—

"Russia and Germany will no doubt revive, but not in this generation nor in the next ; and when they do, they may be very different countries in a world which is a very different world. The position, therefore, has

completely altered. The old viewpoint from which we considered Europe has completely altered. She suffers from an exhaustion which is the most appalling fact of history; and the victorious countries of Europe are not much better off than the vanquished. No, the scene has shifted on the great stage.

"To my mind that is the most important fact in the world situation to-day, and a fact to which our foreign policy should have special regard. Our temptation is still to look upon the European stage as of the first importance. It is no longer so; and I suggest we should not be too deeply occupied with it. Let us be friendly and helpful all round to the best of our ability, but let us not be too deeply involved in it.

"The fires are still burning there, the pot is occasionally boiling over, but these are not really first-rate events any more. This state of affairs in Central Europe will probably continue for many years to come, and no act on our part could very largely alter the situation.

"Therefore, not from feelings of selfishness, but in a spirit of wisdom, one would counsel prudence and reserve in our Continental commitments, that we do not let ourselves in for European entanglements more than is necessary, and that we be impartial, friendly and helpful to all alike, and avoid any partisan attitude in the concerns of the continent of Europe.

"Undoubtedly the scene has shifted away from Europe to the Far East and to the Pacific. The problems of the Pacific are to my mind the problems of the next fifty years or more."¹

Fifty years from 1921 is 1971. War broke out in the Pacific, it is true, in 1941; but it started in Europe in 1939, and Europe was the source from which the poison spread.

I heard Field Marshal Smuts speak at the 1921 Conference, and his words have often come back to me since. They truly represented political opinion, not only in the Dominions but in this country, at the time when they were used—and long afterwards. But they did not (I also remember well)¹ impress the Permanent Under-Secretary of the Foreign Office, Sir Eyre Crowe, who knew Europe better than statesmen from overseas could possibly do. The attitude of the latter was perfectly intelligible, and it led them to disinterest themselves in Europe till suddenly, eighteen years later, they had to choose between neutrality and involvement in another war of purely European birth.

And now once more, as the nineteen-forties fix the shape of things to come, it is the danger presented by the awful hammering of a barbarous and ferocious military cult into German youth that makes Germany the core of the peace problem, and time for her regeneration the core of British policy for some decades ahead. Europe is what her history has made her, and I must try to paint, as best an amateur may, the wide historic background against which this lurid modern barbarism has postured for a space.

¹ Summary of Proceedings, Imperial Conference, June, July and August, 1921 (Cmd. 1474), p. 25.

CHAPTER IV

PRÆ-CÆSARIAN BARBARISM

"The kind of civilization which we specifically designate as European," wrote the late Mr. Herbert Fisher in his masterly *History of Europe*, "reposes not upon a foundation of race, but on an inheritance of thought and achievement and religious aspirations." It was born in Greece, systematized and spread by Rome, transfigured by the Christian faith, broken up for a time by barbarian hordes, refashioned under Pope and Emperor, and finally expressed in the many distinctive national cultures which constitute the Europe of our time. But even in its pagan Roman form, which first made Western Europe some sort of interwoven whole, it took some centuries to mature.

Greek culture never extended beyond the waters, islands and immediate seaboard of the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. Alexander carried it triumphantly to India; but so far as Europe proper was concerned, his Empire was confined to the Eastern Mediterranean basin in the strict sense of that term. There followed the conquest of Carthage by Rome and an astonishing period of armed expansion during which, in the life-space of a single ordinary man, Rome overran the whole Mediterranean world. The next two centuries were a period of unceasing war, marked by oppression, revolt, reconquest and still further oppression, in which the nascent Roman Empire presented a lurid panorama of domestic and foreign strife. At their close the Roman Imperial system founded by Augustus in the half century before the birth of Christ brought all Europe south of the Danube and west of the Rhine under a (for that age) clement and unifying sway.

The great German historian, Mommsen, ascribes the achievement to Julius Caesar. "With him," he wrote, "there came to the much-tormented races of the Mediterranean a tranquil evening after a sultry day." But the Roman peace was in fact established by Augustus, his heir; and Virgil was the laureate of the Augustan Empire, which he hymned as a renaissance of the Golden Age.

The Holy Roman Empire

Darkness set in over Western Europe as the Roman Empire declined and fell ; but after more than three centuries of turmoil the Roman dream of unity resumed its hold upon the European mind. During the period in which the nationalities slowly became conscious of themselves, Europe was welded into a considerable measure of unity by the dual conception of Pope and Emperor, two potentates each of whom was supreme in his own sphere, "Peter in things eternal, Caesar in things temporal." There was indeed a constant struggle between the two ; but the Holy Roman Empire, as its great historian, Bryce, asserts again and again, was nevertheless a spiritual idea which still lives in the mind of civilized man :—

"In the Middle Ages, men conceived of the communion of the saints as the formal unity of an organized body of worshippers, and found the concrete realization of that conception in their universal religious State, which was in one aspect the Church, in another the Empire.

"By it the European peoples were saved from the isolation and narrowness and jealous exclusiveness which had checked the growth of the earlier civilizations of the world.

"For as by the Roman Empire of old the nations were first forced to own a common sway, so by the Empire of the Middle Ages was preserved the feeling of a brotherhood of mankind."¹

Of that Empire Dante was the laureate, and Dante took Virgil for his guide through Hell and Purgatory to the Earthly Paradise.

The ideal of an universal Christian polity was shattered in the centuries which followed by the growing conflict between Popes and Emperors, by the rise of self-conscious nationalities, and by the Reformation, which divided Western Christendom in theory as it had already become divided in fact. But if the principle of the Holy Roman Empire was destroyed—so that, as Voltaire remarked, it was by his time neither Holy nor Roman nor an Empire—the ideal of an universal autocracy lived on in the German race, shedding the concept of human brotherhood and finally abandoning the Christian faith from which that concept sprang.

Central and Southern Germany had been Christianized in the eighth century by Saint Boniface, an Englishman from Devonshire. Charlemagne (whose spiritual adviser was another English-

¹ Bryce's *Holy Roman Empire*, 1922 edition, p. 433.

man, Alcuin of York) attempted to Christianize the savage North-East. Let Mr. Herbert Fisher describe the result :—

"Their idols were broken, their sacred groves were burned; their independence was forfeit; they were compelled to accept the odious creed of their conquerors at the point of the sword. But notwithstanding they remained true to type. Wotan was nearer than Christ. The Latin outlook on the world, clear, orderly and precise, was never theirs."¹

It is tragic indeed that the military genius and organizing power which created the modern German Empire three-quarters of a century ago were those of the German North-East. Brandenburg-Prussia, as Mirabeau said in revolutionary France, is "not a country with an army but an army with a country"—a characteristic which it will strive even after this second World War to retain.

The unification of the German race was finally achieved when Hitler annexed Austria in 1936. That was the end of the Central and Southern German culture which had given much to Western civilization and humankind. But we must beware of the illusion that the German ideal of universal domination is a purely Prussian soldierly ideal, unshared by the German people as a whole. Let Bryce, writing half a century before our modern controversies about Germany, bear witness to the pan-German character of that devastating dream :—

"The Germans had confounded the two characters of their Sovereign so long, and had grown so fond of the style and pretensions of a dignity whose possession appeared to exalt them above the other peoples of Europe, that it was now too late for them to separate the local from the universal Monarch. If a German King was to be maintained at all, he must be Roman Emperor; and a German King there still must be."²

In that form the ideal of a Christian autocracy lived on, but it lost all Christian sense or aim.

Hitler represents its climax, for he, in his own belief, is both Pope and King—a pagan Pope, a satanic King. The old German Emperors were crowned by the religious power. Napoleon at least invited that power to witness his coronation. Mussolini made his terms with the Vatican. Hitler has had no need of other sanction, in this enlightened century, than the German

¹ *History of Europe*, Vol. I, p. 162.

² Bryce's *Holy Roman Empire*, 1922 edition, p. 212.

people's primitive mysticism. He being the last word in autocracy, combines in his person the spiritual and the temporal power.

His pretensions are supported, it is true, by the philosophy of Nietzsche; but, above or below the doctrines of that crude and peculiarly German theorist, he has appealed outright to the lusty ambition of a still uncivilized type of European man who received the universal conception of Rome at second hand, blended it with his old tribal cults, and degraded it to serve a sub-human and anti-Christian aim. Hitler is the climax of that mysticism; let us make sure that he is the end.

It is often urged that a nation should not be held responsible for the crimes of its governors; and it is of course a truism that in the German people, as in others, many different types are combined. But leadership, as I shall argue later in this book, is a two-way affair. Even dictatorships depend to some considerable degree upon the consent and character of the people whom they enslave, though, when once in possession of the mechanism which science has given them, their grip on power is more tenacious than it used to be. Hitler therefore could not have been the evil thing he is if both his mysticism and his brutality had not been in keeping with the dominant psychology of the German race. He has found millions of willing and insensitive human instruments to carry out his will. His mind is a barbarous mind, and its terrible potency has been due to the fact that it reflects a tension endemic in the German soul.

A Dutch psychologist, who is also a medical practitioner, has recently published a study of German mentality based upon personal observation of the Germans in occupation of the Netherlands during the last three years. He shows that history and tradition are interwoven with the being of the State or social system by which the individual is formed, and that in Germans the primitive mass or herd instinct is peculiarly strong:—

"The almost neurotic urge to form a unity which is characteristic of German political thought implies that Germany as a nation is young and self-conscious. The German's sense of collective unity is a primitive one, it is a *participation mystique*. It over-rides individuality altogether and is felt as a kind of ecstasy. Deutschland, in fact, becomes the fetish, the All-Father from which the German cannot detach himself. Such primitive emotions hamper the growth of that free critical spirit which is essential to a true democracy."¹

¹ *Total War and the Human Mind*, by Major A. M. Meerloo, 1944.

It is in keeping with this trait that the German emigrant to other lands should identify himself very rapidly and completely with the new social system into which he moves. But in Germany itself the primitive instincts are deeply rooted, and the atmosphere of the whole country is now so strongly impregnated with racial fanaticism that they will constitute a standing menace to our civilization for many decades to come. If, then, we forget in a few years how barbarous they are and relax our guard on them, they will germinate another war as surely as the tides recede to rise again.

The Legacy of Rome

The Roman method belongs to a distant past, but it had a justification without counterpart in our own time. Even the more enlightened portions of Europe were still for the most part tribal and disorganized when the Roman Republic came to an end; and the birth of the idea that Europe should be brought together and governed as an interconnected whole was unquestionably due to the men who built the Roman Empire at that time. They found a wilderness scarred by many alternating conquests, much misgovernment and almost ceaseless internal strife; they created a new order with an extensive common citizenship, a common system of law, a cultured network of towns, and some considerable measure of local self-government. Romanized Gaul and Britain, for instance, then achieved a peace and unity which they had not hitherto known. Their peoples enjoyed a wide prosperity and led a life without serious oppression, modelled on Roman culture but largely of their own. Western and Southern Europe has probably never been more tranquil than it was under Roman rule; and the Roman era in Britain was longer than that which divides us from Elizabethan England and the birth of British sea power.

Central government under the dual authority of temporal and ecclesiastical power became in later centuries an accepted European ideal. It was never actually realized, and weakened century by century as the sense of Christian unity gave way to the great religious wars and then to the rising forces of nationalism. But there is no doubt that, beneath this deep resistance to super-national control, the nations of Western Europe have not lost the "European sense" which is their legacy from the Holy Roman Empire and from Ancient Rome. President Wilson

touched the heart of Europe with his insistence upon the rights of nationhood within a world-wide system based on the brotherhood of man. It is indeed notable that Germany's two challenges to Europe have encountered the resistance not only of other European nations but of the great off-shoots of her civilization which she has planted in other continents, and more particularly of the British Commonwealth and the United States. There could be no more convincing demonstration that western civilization is still in some real sense a whole.

Germany and Rome

What, then, is meant by Hitler's claim to be the champion of that civilization? What is his case for attempting a central dominance which Europe has rejected again and again? It is worth our while to consider the matter in the light of history because it throws a vivid light upon the central problem of Europe and of peace in our time. Is there anything new in Hitler's vision of a new European order? And if so, in what does it consist?

There is, in fact, nothing new in Hitler's new order except the terrible machinery of oppression with which modern science has armed an ideal of government as old as history itself. Hitler bases himself upon two principles—that of the heaven-born autocrat, the *Führer-prinzip*, and that of the dominant race, the *Herrenvolk*. It is remarkable that those two principles should be presented as new, since they were—it is true, in a much more civilized form—the principles on which Europe first became an orderly and conscious whole south of the Danube and west of the Rhine. It is nearly two thousand years since Augustus anticipated Hitler's new order, and in his day Europe was a different place. He gave a framework of law and orderly government and an entirely new coherence to a Europe which was still for the most part primitive and barbarous. It was something in that age to combine the grandeur of Rome with the glory of Greece, and to create the conditions in which a civilization derived from both could take enduring root; whereas Hitler's new order is a blind reversion to ideas which served their purpose in Europe's infancy and adolescence but have never since been revived without awaking a resistance deep as the roots of civilization itself.

The Voice of Europe's Better Mind

That there may be no doubt as to the archaic character of Hitler's new dispensation, let us go to the poet who heralded the better order given to Europe by Rome.

Virgil was the laureate of Augustus, but he was also, more than any other poet, the voice of Europe's better mind in and since his time. Born seventy years before Christ and living only to the age of fifty-one, he expressed more poignantly than any ancient writer those deeper currents in the human spirit which revolt from war and lawlessness, from all forms of oppression, and from the cruelty of man to man. For that reason he has always been venerated as a seer of Christian temper and has held the reverence of all great European minds for twenty centuries since he himself lived and sang. Thirteen hundred years after his death he was the chosen guide of such a soul as Dante's through the mysteries of the unseen world; and five centuries later still it was said of him by a great critic of European literature, Sainte Beuve, that "he had divined at a decisive hour of the world what the future would love and desire." No writer of any age or country has made so continuous or so universal an appeal to the heart and mind of that European civilization which springs as a political entity from the Roman peace inaugurated in Augustan times.

It is a desperate venture to attempt even the loosest paraphrase of Virgil in any other tongue, and I can only apologize for the cheap and tawdry effort here made. Rudyard Kipling tells us in *Something of Myself* that he loathed Horace for two years after he left school, forgot him for twenty more, and then loved him for the rest of his days. There are many victims of compulsory Latin at school who never, I fear, return to it as Kipling did in his later years; and many others who, alas, have never learnt it at all. It is only from these that I can hope for tolerance.

Virgil, for all his humanism, had no qualms at all about the necessity of a Heaven-sent Leader and a Master Race for the world into which he was born. Let those who will detect no more than an anxious courtier's tribute in the forecast of Augustus which is given to Aeneas in the Elysian Fields. To me, in this and other equally apocalyptic passages, Virgil's cry of faith rings true:—

Behold the man, oft promis'd to thy line,
Cæsar Augustus, by his race divine;
Beyond the furthest star his light shall burn,
And 'neath his sway the Golden Age return.¹

¹ *Æneid* VI, lines 791-797.

It is not, I suggest, a matter of mere chance that while the trumpets have often brayed round Hitler, no poet has been found to proclaim his mission in any terms that will survive his brief and terrible reign. "*Ave Caesar*" was, in its time, a cry which echoed real hope in many peoples and did not soil the lips of forward-looking men. "Heil Hitler" is the slogan, not of a new order, but of a slavish relapse into pre-Caesarian barbarism.

There is equal splendour and equal faith in Virgil's exhortation to the Romans as a master people (his own stock was of Cisalpine Gaul):—

Let other hands, more gifted than thine own,
Strike living beauty from the lifeless stone;
Debate, persuade, or shape the pleader's lies;
Count every star, and measure out the skies.
Thine, Roman, thine to wield the sword of rule,
To spare the vanquish'd and the proud to school;
Thine art to bid the strife of peoples cease
And weld thine Empire in a Roman peace.¹

That is unquestionably the doctrine of the *Herrenvolk* in a nobler Roman guise; but Rome's imperishable bequest to Europe proves that something greater than lust for conquest and domination made her the mistress of European destinies when Europe as a polity was born.

Virgil and War

All this is in Virgil too, for Virgil is in many ways the voice of human yearning in every age and clime. He is, for instance, one with the simple men and women of this and all other centuries in his loathing of the destruction wrought by war:—

Wrong rides the heavens, Right cowers in the slime
In countless shapes of cruelty and crime
War rings the earth and darkens every clime;
Due honour to the plough no longer paid,
The curving scythe a sword of battle made;
Torn from its tilth, the homely labour gone,
And squalid waste where once fair harvests shone;
No peace from northern mist to southern main,
No law 'twixt nations save the law of Cain,
And Slaughter raging naked in a world of pain.²

¹ *Æneid* VI, lines 847-853.

² *Georgic* I, lines 505-11.

Hitler's new order is based by contrast upon a glorification of war as the noblest activity for which men and women are born.

Equally human is Virgil in his picture of the life which will most truly ennoble the race of man. He came of yeoman stock and therefore thought of all felicity and virtue as wedded to the soil. Never before in poetry had love of the land been more magically expressed or its call for labour, its changing beauty and the gifts which these bestow. But at the heart of all the glowing imagery in which he paints a return of the Golden Age is that universal yearning for better times which runs through town and country in every part of Europe to-day—the yearning for security from want and lawless force and fear:—

Freedom and peace which cannot us betray,
And plenty spreading as the light of day.¹

It was no accident that in one of the last and most lovely of his lyrics, the Chorus to *Hellas*, written in 1821, Shelley literally translated two lines of the Fourth Eclogue, into which as a dreaming youth Virgil had poured his faith in the regeneration of man; for Shelley himself acknowledged the debt in his own notes to the poem:—

The world's great age begins anew,
The golden years return,
The earth doth like a snake renew
Her winter weeds outworn;
Heaven smiles, and faiths and empires gleam
Like wrecks of a dissolving dream.

Both Virgil and Shelley, eighteen centuries after him, died at a moment when it seemed that a freer and happier dispensation lay within the reach of man. We of 1944 inherit their dreams, which burn more brightly than ever amongst millions of our time. But let us be clear about it—the old method of domination, whether racial or dynastic or ideological in any modern form, cannot give us our desire. Europe cannot hope to build a better reality upon such foundations, and least of all upon any such order as Hitler has striven to realize; for his ideal of European government is by many centuries of growth and cultural development inferior to the ideal of common European citizenship established by Rome.

¹ *Georgic II*, lines 467–8.

German Barbarism

Imperial Rome with its slaves, its lust and luxury in high places, its bribery of the masses in the capital and its gradual heart-decay, was nevertheless true to Virgil's vision in spreading over Western and Southern Europe a civilization more equal and more humane than any which its peoples had hitherto attained. It had its *Führerprinzip* and, for a period at least, its *Herrenvolk*; but these were the basis of a freer and better-knitted life than Europe had conceived before its day:—

Of all earth's conquerors 'twas Rome alone
Who raised the peoples by her arm laid prone,
Played not a mistress' but a mother's part
And as one race took all men to her heart.¹

These lines were written by a provincial at the turn of the fourth and fifth centuries, when the Roman Legions were perforce abandoning Britain and Gaul to a new surge of barbarism. Will Germany ever be hymned in terms like those by some French poet of the age to come?

The Romans, in fact, were civilizers, and they were the first to give Europe the ideal of a common citizenship—two thousand, yes, two thousand years ago. Even if the German lust for domination had any such true pretext in the conditions of our time, Europe has outgrown by many centuries the method of a central autocracy and a master race which Hitler regards as new. The Germans, therefore, are barbarizers, and Europe must find some better principle of unity than the reactionary domination which they have striven to impose on her.

What is that principle to be? Yearning alone will not achieve her aim, since the yearning of simple people is as ancient as their sufferings and has hitherto always been in vain. She needs new action now, better than any in the past, and constancy to make the effort and, if need be, the sacrifice over a long period of years. What are the main lines of action that, on this problem, England should pursue?

¹ Claudian, *In Secundum Consulatum Stilichonis*, lines 150-3.

CHAPTER V

BUTTER, BUT NO GUNS

Sweeping general principles are comparatively easy to state, but much more difficult to apply. If all that I have hitherto said about the insensate and pre-Cæsarian character of German aims is true, the German people cannot themselves be subjected to similar treatment by their more civilized contemporaries. The fact that they have sinned against the light in seeking to reduce other proud nations to subservience does not justify a similar attempt against them ; nor is it reasonable to suppose that any such attempt could in the long run succeed. What is true of smaller nations must be no less true of one with Germany's immense capacity and power for good or ill. But how to ensure to Germany the rights of which she has sought to deprive her European compeers without inviting another outburst of the barbarous instincts which lie behind her dominant military tradition and prodigious herd-organizing skill, is the first and most formidable of the peace problems to be solved.

German Unity

It is early yet to discuss the settlement with Germany, since no one can say as I write this chapter, in what way the European war will end ; and I have an invincible dislike of attempts to fix the fate of the trapped elephant before his captors are well established on both sides of him. But Britain's policy in Europe cannot be considered at all without taking into account the substantial place in the European family which sixty or seventy million Germans are bound to hold, and in that process some assumptions must inevitably be made.

Certain aims have already been defined. The communiqué published after the Moscow Conference of October, 1943, which brought together Mr. Eden, Mr. Molotov and Mr. Cordell Hull, declared that their three countries and China would "continue hostilities against the Axis Powers with which they respectively are at war until such Powers have laid down their arms on the

basis of unconditional surrender," and also that they would "act together in all matters relating to the surrender and disarmament of that enemy." So far as territory annexed to Germany was concerned, they proclaimed their wish "to see re-established a free and independent Austria." They are furthermore united in their determination that Czechoslovakia shall recover the frontiers which she lost at the Munich Conference a year before the war.

Nothing more has been published as to those Governments' views upon the future boundaries of the Reich, but it seems more than likely that Poland may be invited to annex some part at least of East Prussia (Russia annexing the rest) as well as that part of Upper Silesia which was assigned to Germany after the plebiscite of 1921. There is also bound to be much argument about the future of the Rhineland, since France and the Low Countries are deeply concerned in it and there is a natural nexus between the industries of Lorraine and the Ruhr. Consideration will no doubt be given to the claims of Denmark, whatever these may be; to the question of control over Heligoland and the Kiel Canal; and, finally, to that powerful school of thought amongst Germany's closest neighbours which holds that the fateful supremacy of Prussian aims and ideals over the German people as a whole will never be exorcised unless the unity imposed upon the Third Reich by the Nazi administrative machine is radically modified. The suggestion has also been heard that if Germany (less Austria, East Prussia and other territories on the fringes of the central German bloc) is to remain a unitary or federal whole, its capital city should no longer be Berlin.

Britain and Germany

The essential point, from the British angle, is that the settlement with Germany should be one which will accord with British character and principle in the years to come. The worst of all would be to commit ourselves to peace terms with Germany which our people may later begin to consider wrong. That is what happened in 1919. After the last war this country shifted from a strong determination that Germany should be held to the terms of the peace settlement by superior force and never permitted to rearm to a complacent acceptance of successive breaches of that settlement and even to a sentimental conviction that peace would not be secure until Germany had been restored to equality

in arms. We know the sequel, and the moral is surely plain. It is to avoid in the heat of victory all terms of settlement with Germany on which we are likely to weaken when cooler judgment returns.

To ensure this we must make as certain as we can that the principles which govern the settlement are in keeping with the tolerant frame of mind to which, like a magnetic north, the needle of our national character invariably returns.

On one point the warning of our history is clear. It is that Britain is certain to relax on any policy which seeks to deprive the German or any other people of the normal rights and liberties of nationhood. We are incurably addicted as a nation to the process of living and letting live, and nothing will ever persuade us for more than a few very fleeting years that we are justified in breaking up another great nation against its will or in striving to keep it in leading-strings.

We may assuredly agree that the future of an off-shoot like East Prussia or of a considerable fringe of disputable borderland should be settled in accordance with the needs and wishes of the neighbour States which are most closely concerned. There is no abstract justice which human wisdom can define in matters of this kind; the course of reason is to support the neighbour States in any modifications of the German frontiers which will help to make them prosperous and secure. But when all this has been done, we cannot undertake the task of leadership in Western Europe without a clear conception of the place in European affairs which the great bulk of Germany is to hold.

Democracy in Germany

Vision is an essential component of statesmanship; but nothing will betray the future more surely than failure to deal with the realities of the time. In the case of Germany there is small room for doubt as to what the realities are.

First and foremost is the fact that every living German between boyhood and middle age has been schooled by discipline and doctrine to an anti-democratic, militarist and aggressive turn of mind. Those who were ten years old in 1919, when sedulous propaganda about the wrongs of Germany began, are now thirty-six. Those who were in their twenties at that time are in their forties and fifties to-day. Germans must in the main be taught by Germans; and it is from the present case-hardened twenties

to forties that the majority of teachers must come. Let us not then imagine that the awful warping of German capacity and intellect which has been in process with growing intensity for the past twenty-five years will easily be put right.

Neither nominally democratic forms of government nor federal institutions nor radical dismemberment of the Reich will dispose of this, Europe's main danger, for many decades to come. The Germany which has caused two wars will still be there twenty, thirty, forty years on; and she will cause yet another war, if the East and the West of Europe do not combine with constancy and genuine understanding to keep a military renaissance beyond her power.

There is something deep in the soul of Germany which responds instinctively to Wagner's motifs for the forging and the flashing of the Sword. Bismarck welded her to unity in the smithy of war; William the Second, with far less wisdom, broadened and deepened its appeal; Hitler's magnetic leadership has drawn its inspiration from the same theme. Wagner's music-dramas are indeed amazingly typical of the Germany which achieved unity in his time. Beneath the rich veins of musical poetry and comfortable homeliness which glow throughout the score of the *Mastersingers of Nuremberg*, the German is at heart a Nibelung. He will be the subservient Mime with Siegfried standing over him to make him toil and sweat so long as any hope of re forging the broken Sword still lingers in his heart. The choice of Nuremberg as the central theatre for the showmen of the Nazi regime is a parable which the blindest amongst us should not misunderstand.

At the same time the German people must be enabled to earn a decent living and lead an industrious life if the economy and peace of Europe are to be restored. It is in this conflict of necessities, of giving Germany access to prosperity without at the same time giving her the means of preparing another war, that our master problem lies. "Butter, but no guns"—there lies the issue.

No one will, I hope, imagine that the control necessary to prevent the re forging of the Sword can be easily established or maintained. The network of military, industrial and political activity through which the leaders of Germany prepared this war was a masterpiece of its kind, founded on intense scientific research and the organization of giant cartels. Two books have recently been published in the United States which throw a most

revealing light upon Germany's development of a vast range of synthetic products facilitated by the operation of international cartels. Mr. Joseph Borkin, one of the joint authors of *Germany's Master Plan*, has been for many years Economic Adviser to the Anti-Trust Division of the United States Department of Justice. Mr. Charles Welsh, the other, is a cartel expert in the United Office of Price Administration. The documentary evidence to which they have had access is formidable and admirably set out. Summarizing the conclusions of the book in a powerful preface, Mr. Thurman Arnold declares that "we cannot win the peace if the cartel problem remains unsolved."

The author of another book on the same subject, *Patents for Hitler*, is a German economist, named Guenter Reimann, once widely known in Germany itself as a student of cartels. An introduction is contributed by Mr. Creekmore Fath, who was General Counsel to the Senate Committee on Patents in a recent investigation. He declares that Hitler's "economic, diplomatic and military war are all elements in one co-ordinated drive for world control—all of them clear, ruthless and evil in similar ways."

It is impossible to read either of these books without realizing that the industrial and commercial magnates of Germany have been no less important than the soldiers as elements in the German war machine. The policy of "Butter but no Guns," will get us nowhere if we fail to prevent the re-establishment of their astonishing web of international controls. For that purpose we shall need to understand the German industrial system far better than we did after the last war. But that is not all. The resources of great organizations like the German "I.G. Farben,"¹ are immense, and the States which mean to control their worldwide ramifications must be prepared to make a drastic use of power. That responsibility cannot be left without disaster to a World Organization for the Maintenance of Peace. It must be taken by the Governments of the world's chief economic Powers.

The Concert of Europe

The same moral in fact emerges whether we look to industrial and commercial measures necessary for the stabilization of peace or to military and political ones.

¹ *Interessen Gemeinschaft Farbenindustrie Aktiengesellschaft.*

No European people except our own has ever believed that responsibility for keeping the peace of their own enlightened continent can be effectively and impartially distributed over all the nations of the earth ; and they are further from believing it to-day than ever before. Europe must have an equilibrium of her own if she is to avoid another war, and no equilibrium is possible unless three conditions are fulfilled.

First and foremost is an alliance between Britain and Russia. Those two Powers are the essential buttresses, East and West, of any peace system that Germany cannot overthrow, since (barring Germany) they are the only two who command the resources necessary for modern war. The alliance has been made ; but it has as yet no common policy towards Germany or towards Europe as a whole which the public understands.

Second therefore is an organization round the two main buttresses such as will restore to every European nation the dignity and status which Germany has destroyed. Nationality is a force which must have air and freedom under its own patch of sky.

Thirdly, Britain's role in Europe must be related to her affiliations, needs and responsibilities throughout the rest of the world. The part that peace in Europe requires of her will be far more exacting henceforth than it has ever been before. Her practice hitherto has been to isolate herself from her own continent as soon as her spasmodic interventions had saved herself and it from domination by any overmastering throne. That large and fruitful freedom has been taken from her by the conquest of the air ; but her strength continues to depend upon a range of oceanic activities which compel her to be a World Power no less than an European Power, and it is fortunate for her that no continent can now have faith in isolation for the security its nations require.

None the less, Britain's first consideration must henceforth be a working Concert of Europe, with herself and Russia for its leading players, but with real freedom for all the individual instruments which that ancient orchestra contains. Let us then once more survey the European scene in order to set out with clearness the complex problem which British foreign policy is called upon to solve.

CHAPTER VI

THE RUSSIAN ENIGMA

Civilization in the West of Europe has a different history from its counterpart in the East. It was the regions south of the Danube and West of the Rhine that first produced a civilized and interwoven society of peoples under the firm hand of Rome. When the Roman Empire and the Church were divided between the ancient Roman capital and the new one at Byzantium, South Eastern Europe went mostly to the latter and became a separate realm. These Southern peoples, later still, were overrun for some centuries by Ottoman rule. They are therefore in part still Moslem by faith, and they have only emerged as national entities in the past century. Of the three great branches of the Slav race, Eastern, Western and Southern, the last have had no independent existence such as that enjoyed by their Slav kindred to the north for the last thousand years.

Great and Little Russia is the country of the Eastern Slavs. Its civilization, which is Orthodox and Byzantine by origin, is not so ancient as that of the West and in many ways distinct from it. The Western civilization which has colonized and transformed so large a part of the earth derives entirely from the Western nations, Britain, France, Holland, Italy, Spain and Portugal. While it was gathering shape in Europe and overflowing across the seas, Russia was developing in a different way and had no part in the expansion of European ideas. She was blocked to the south by the Ottoman Empire, to the west by her long struggle with the Western Slavs as represented by the Poles, and to the north by the Arctic Seas. Her natural outlet lay eastwards into what is now Asiatic Russia, but the colonization and exploitation as opposed to mere conquest of that vast territory was never seriously undertaken until the last twenty years.

This age-long isolation of the Russian people is a fact of great significance which deeply influences the European problem of our own day, and particularly that of the Poles. Mr. B. H. Sumner,

author of the most recent factual history of the Russian world, puts the position thus :—

"The Polish magnates and gentry, who together with the Church shaped and controlled Poland, implanted on her a proud consciousness of being the bastion of Catholicism and European culture against what to them was a half-Byzantine, half-Asiatic barbarism. This feeling of representing a superior civilization was fused during the partition period (1772-1919) with additional contempt, hatred and fear of the Russian autocracy, after 1815 in possession of the solidly Polish central Vistula lands. When the Revolution replaced the Russian Empire by the Soviet Union, these feelings were transmuted into the idea of a new independent Poland as the upholder of civilization against the new barbarism of Bolshevism. The Bolshevik challenge of class revolution and interpretation of self-determination seemed to deny the independence even of ethnographic Poland and to make her eastern lands a strategical necessity even apart from other grounds."¹

For some centuries this struggle between the Russian and Polish peoples, both Slav, raged incessantly and with varying fortunes across what is called White Russia and the Ukraine west of the Dnieper bend. Since we have a similar history to mark in Ireland, at our own doors, we should understand how thorny and intractable such legacies may become.

Isolation is never complete, since thought, experience and invention are forces which make their own viewless way. German organizing capacity and French culture left their mark on Russia in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Russia herself sent her armies westward into Germany and France, and played her part in European history at critical turns of the wheel. But Russia as a whole has only awoken to active and constructive life in the past twenty years ; and now that the long hibernization of her people under the snows of primitive and hopeless servitude has come to an end, it has given way to a moral and material uprising which has astounded even her most understanding friends.

Genius of high quality the Russian people have always had, as witness their music, their literature, their scientific work and their stage ; but it has always seemed to be a genius in dark and pessimistic travail or a genius clanking its chains. Dawn has now broken upon the long night of monotonous labour and intellectual gloom. The Russian people have immense resources, which they know at last how to use. They have an army of great efficiency and power, drawing on their natural readiness for common service and sacrifice. Rising from the peasant's

¹ *Survey of Russian History*, by B. H. Sumner, 1944, pp. 197-8.

age-long devotion to the land, the surge of revolution has blended with a proud and conscious patriotism which unites all the component strains. They have, above all, a sense of mission, as of men who have founded a new order of society upon truths long trampled or ignored by other races of men. This is a portent and an enigma. No wonder that it is raising anxious question throughout the civilized world.

Of all the changes revealed in the fierce light of war Russian mechanical and organizing efficiency is that which was least expected even by those who thought they knew ; and it is, in its inception and development, the work of a single leader, who towers above the swiftly moving scene. Marshal Stalin, a Georgian, has already proved himself a greater ruler than any of the Tsars. Monarchs such as Peter the Great and Catherine, Alexander the First and Alexander the Second, were builders and reformers in the style and idiom of their own times ; but none of the Romanovs who succeeded them was capable of making good the wealth of his great heritage in human values or in material power. In Russia, as in France a century and a quarter before, it was revolution only that could break the ice of ages and release the underlying strength of the stream.

But in the Russian Revolution, as in the French, the new directing power passed through a succession of phases from moderate reform to extreme theoretic virulence and then to a compromise between old ideas and new. France had no such dominating figure for the period of paroxysm as Russia had in Lenin ; it was due to that intense and remarkable man that Communism was abandoned as a practical method, if not as an ultimate theoretic aim, within four years of his accession to power. The New Economic Policy, launched in 1921, was in effect a repudiation of the ideal of "Communism here, at once and everywhere" with which the real Revolution began ; but it was that ideal, appealing as it does with special force to Russian thought and character, that swept the old order away.

Stalin is generally held to have been the strongest individual force behind the New Economic Policy ; but Lenin distrusted him and is said to have warned the faithful against him before his death. When that took place in 1924, the executive power passed to a triumvirate in which Stalin was picketed on either side by Zinoviev and Kamenev, two stalwarts of the fanatical Communist school. He was, however, General Secretary of the Party ; and when Trotsky revealed its internal dissensions in

1924, the older revolutionaries were heavily outvoted at the Party Congress and driven in a four years' struggle from the seats of power. The opposition then went underground, but it was not finally liquidated till 1936, when Zinoviev, Kamenev and others were tried in open court for conspiracy against the lives of Stalin, Voroshilov and other leaders of the Soviet Union. They all confessed complicity and were executed. Trotsky, who had been deported from Russia in 1929, was murdered in 1939, in Mexico.

There was a fundamental difference both of judgment and of aim between Stalin and his domestic adversaries. The latter, believed in world-propaganda and a universal revolution through which they as leaders would transfigure the lot of mankind. Stalin was no less revolutionary in many of his ideas; but he was for the transfiguration of his own land, and he read the future with sufficient clarity to realize that if the new Russia were to endure, it must at all costs be self-sufficient and strong. *Mein Kampf* had been published in 1924; and while Stalin was developing his Five-Year Plans, Hitler was scheming his way to power. His adoption by the military leaders of Germany made him Chancellor in 1933, and every act that followed for six and a half years enlarged the letters of the writing on the wall.¹

In 1934, Pilsudski, the Polish President, opted with some hesitation for Germany rather than Russia and signed a treaty with the former intended to last ten years. Japan had, by then, already swept into Manchuria. The Axis, with the Russian revolution as its principal enemy, was formally constituted and proclaimed. Britain and France were no longer to be counted upon as military counterweights to Germany, since both were governed by a popular opinion which loathed all preparation for war. To the watcher in the Kremlin, striving to produce war-worthiness in all its forms for his own still backward and largely peasant land, it must often in those years have seemed a moral certainty that when the struggle came, Russia rather than Germany would be taken between two fires.

This was the lowering background against which Stalin multiplied and remultiplied the resources of his vast realm, creating within twelve years an output of natural wealth, an industry, an agriculture, an army and, above all, a people equal to the shock and strain and immensely various demands of totalitarian war. The method does not concern me in this study, nor is it our affair. His fanatical opponents would have con-

demned the country to military impotence, while their zeal for subverting the institutions of other nations deprived it of all hope of military allies. He achieved his task by diplomacy abroad and gigantic effort at home—but only just in time.

Hitler's bid for domination has now become no more than a desperate struggle to preserve some measure of power. He will do his utmost to divide the United Nations in 1944 and 1945, as his predecessors did in 1918; and it would be criminal folly not to face the fact that he has weapons in some of our uncertainties which might, if we allowed it, serve the German aim. "I want to save my Army," cried Ludendorff, in October, 1918. Britain, France and the United States were not at one upon the principles of the peace settlement which Europe then required, and the elements of a rapid military renaissance in Germany were in consequence preserved. The same thing may happen again, since we have by no means heard the last of the argument, which German propaganda will use, that without a reasonably powerful Germany, Russia will overshadow Europe and mould it as she wills. In his January broadcast Hitler said that very thing.

There is no denying that some of this seed may fall on fruitful ground. Now that a new Europe is once more in the making, people in many quarters of the world, both Old and New, are wondering whether the Russian hunter will not prove even more dangerous to their way of life and tranquillity of mind than the German beast of prey he has helped them to surround. Britain's course upon this question must be straight, high-principled and clear, if she is to keep the trust not only of other nations but of her own kin. The issue turns on what we mean by freedom, for others as well as ourselves. Will Soviet Russia honestly share and ensure the principles of freedom which we regard as cardinal? Some events in recent history have given rise to doubt in many unprejudiced minds, and this doubt must be sifted so far as it can. But while events may afford some pointers, the answer needs to be sought in the character of the Russian people and the mind of a great man. Stalin unquestionably knows his people, and will act as their interest and genius, in his opinion, demand.

Let us, then, as briefly as is consistent with the complexity of these three themes, consider the events which have roused suspicion, the nature of the Russian people, and finally the trend of Russian policy so far as we can judge it from the words which Stalin has spoken and the deeds which he has done.

CHAPTER VII

STALIN'S LEADERSHIP

The events which have caused the most anxiety in the Western World are Russia's agreement with Germany in 1939; her advance into Eastern Poland when, a bare two months later, the Germans had destroyed all semblance of a Polish State, and her attack on Finland within the next few months. In many quarters these actions are regarded as proof of a militant imperialism which has little to distinguish it from Hitler's iron heel. Stalin has consistently denounced the Nazi and Fascist ideal of domination over other peoples. Will Soviet idealism, so the question goes, prove any better than the Nazi variety? Has Communist propaganda of the underground subversive type given way to nothing better than Communist imperialism based on military power? And if so, what value is there in the devotion which Stalin consistently proclaims to democracy, freedom, and the right of all peoples to have what type of government they please?

The attack on Finland and the seizure of Eastern Poland from the rear when Germany had overwhelmed the Polish defence are events on a different plane from the controversy with Poland which has since ensued. Russia was in imminent danger when her two first deeds of aggression were done. I will therefore take them separately, leaving the main issue between Russia and Poland for discussion later on.

The Russian Agreement with Germany

Russia's agreement with Germany in August, 1939, struck Western Europe like a thunderbolt and made a certainty of war. Because of it, in the circumstances of the day, Britain's guarantee to Poland and Rumania ceased to have a deterrent value of any sort. Germany believed that Britain and France would behave as they had at Munich in 1938 and leave their protégé to the lion while exhorting both lion and victim to be moderate. There is no doubt that Stalin shared the German view of Britain and France at that date.

We may think such scepticism reprehensible, since we did in fact declare war on Germany in the following month, though unable to help Poland with military support by sea, land or air. But we must guard against the lack of realism which such indignation betrays, since that was the besetting sin which threw our former victory over Germany to the winds. Stalin had good reason for his opinion, and his prime responsibility was to gain such time as he could for his own preparations to mature. He had read *Mein Kampf* and could have harboured no illusions as to Germany's ultimate aims.

To understand his judgment, the long unhappy prelude to the climax of 1939 must be borne in mind. Russia had stood for united and efficient action against any aggressor nation from the day she joined the League of Nations in 1934. Litvinov's motto "peace is indivisible" had never been honoured in practice by any member of that League. Germany had torn up the peace settlement page by page, and none had intervened. Turkey and Japan had done the same. Italy had flouted the League and had been allowed to devour her helpless prey. France was bound by treaty to Czechoslovakia; but when that country faced dismemberment and then extinction, she would not lift a hand. Poland had made an agreement with Germany in 1934, and had seized the hour of Czechoslovakia's abandonment to acquire for herself the whole of the Teschen coal-mines. Britain had guaranteed the integrity of Czechoslovakia less the Sudetenland at the Munich Conference. But what did that avail the smitten victim when Prague was swallowed in the following spring?

Undeterred by this humiliation, Britain had undertaken to support both Poland and Rumania, should they be attacked. But this new pledge was bound to prove as valueless in a military sense as that given to the Czechs unless one further condition were fulfilled. Britain needed urgently to conclude an alliance with some land-Power not altogether unequal to Germany, if Poland, and perhaps also Rumania, were to be saved. Russia was the only military Power which could meet her need. These were the conditions in which a military mission was sent to Moscow in the summer of 1939.

The character of the negotiations which ensued has never been officially revealed, and comment on them is therefore guess-work so far as the details are concerned. But certain facts are clear. The British Mission, to begin with, was not equal in

weight or authority to the magnitude of the issues at stake. There was, in the second place much argument about the future of the Baltic States, in which Russia had reason to fear the infiltration of German influence. Thirdly, there was in leading British circles an inexpugnable suspicion of Soviet Russia as a potential ally. The Revolution had left its scars on Russia's foreign relations, and the dominant motive of Stalin's counter-revolution was not yet understood.

Week succeeded week, and no progress was made. On 19th May, a debate took place in the House of Commons, notable for strong appeals from Mr. Churchill and Mr. Eden, then out of office, to the Government Front Bench. This is what Mr. Churchill said:—

"... I have been quite unable to understand what is the objection to making the agreement with Russia which the Prime Minister professes himself desirous of doing, and making it in the broad and simple form proposed by the Russian Soviet Government.

"Clearly, Russia is not going to enter into agreements unless she is treated as an equal, and not only treated as an equal, but has confidence that the methods employed by the allies—by the peace front—are such as would be likely to lead to success. No one wants to associate themselves with indeterminate leadership and uncertain policies. The Government must realise that none of these States in Eastern Europe can maintain themselves for, say, a year's war unless they have behind them the massive, solid backing of a friendly Russia, joined to the combination of the Western Powers.

"Certainly, I do not ask favours of Soviet Russia. This is no time to ask favours of countries. But here is an offer, a fair offer, and a better offer, in my opinion, than the terms which the Government seek to get for themselves; a more simple, a more direct and a more effective offer. Let it not be put aside and come to nothing. I beg His Majesty's Government to get some of these brutal truths into their heads. Without any effective Eastern Front, there can be no satisfactory defence of our interests in the West, and without Russia there can be no effective Eastern front."

Mr. Neville Chamberlain's speech in the debate enlightened nobody; but before he rose the Speaker had called a private Conservative member who denounced the offer of an alliance by Russia as "a trap which we should at all costs avoid." The Government Front Bench was thought by many—perhaps unjustly—to share his point of view. In any case the alliance was avoided, and the costs not only to Britain but to Poland, Norway, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, France, Yugoslavia and Greece, are now being fully met.

There is, it is true, no certainty that a military alliance between Britain, France, and Russia would have averted another German war; but it offered the only reasonable chance of a postponement, and the war would have taken a far less critical form, had it been immediately declared. We do not know what conditions were made upon the Russian side; but some were probably difficult, and one must have been a definite undertaking on the part of Britain and France to attack Germany outright and all out from the west, if Russia attacked to the east. Would the weight and determination of our attack from the west have been sufficient to save Russia, still far from adequately prepared to withstand the shock of German arms? And how would Poland have acted, if Germany had declared that the annihilation of Soviet Russia was her principal aim? Furthermore, what measures in the Vladivostok region might have been taken by Japan, if Russia's forces were needed in the West?

Only prejudice can suggest that the man in the Kremlin had no reason to weigh these contingencies in the light of his own judgment of what would best accord with the safety of his State. It seems most probable that the tentative character of our negotiations, long protracted, finally tipped the scale upon the German side. Stalin doubtless knew that, granted his abstention from the struggle, Germany would strike at Poland in a night. He must also have calculated that he could then prevent the complete absorption of Poland by Germany as a springboard for the attack on Russia foreshadowed in *Mein Kampf*. He could not know how much time he would gain; Germany might well have turned upon Russia in 1940 instead of turning upon France. Hitler gained by the course he chose because the annihilation of France made his rear secure and vastly increased his reserve of armaments. But Stalin also gained, and military historians of the future may conclude that Stalin gained the more.

For Stalin, at any rate, it was the safety of Russia that counted, not that of Britain or Poland or France. When once the die was cast for temporizing with Germany, the advance into Eastern Poland followed as a matter of course. It was a further measure of security, of no cost to stricken Poland, which had already ceased to exist as an independent State. The German army was halted two hundred miles further from Moscow, and that gain of distance may well have saved the Russian capital, since in the Duke of Wellington's words to Creevey about Water-

loo, the defence of Moscow was in any case "a damn'd nice thing—the nearest run thing you ever saw in your life."

✓It is difficult to believe that any future Russian historian, however impartial, will find fault on ethical or any other grounds with the course which Stalin pursued. But history is many-sided; and it may be that foreign historians will decide against him when all the facts are known. There are incidents in our own history, such as Nelson's destruction of the Danish fleet at Copenhagen, which belong to the same debatable borderland; and American historians have found themselves in equal difficulty with such matters as the inception of the Spanish War and acquisition of the Panama Canal Zone. No great country can lay its hand upon its heart and claim never to have acted for broadly similar reasons on broadly similar lines. ✓It therefore seems to me unreasonable to maintain that Russia can never be trusted because she marched into Poland to check the German onset in 1939. French North Africa was not under German occupation in 1942, but we occupied it none the less without any sense of shame.

Russia and Finland

The case for Stalin's unprovoked attack on Finland is different, but it is equally hard to reject. From the views which we trumpeted at the time it might have seemed that a giant was crushing a pygmy without reason or excuse; but we had little understanding then of Russia's danger at the hands of Germany and no acquaintance with certain momentous facts.

The point to be borne in mind is Stalin's dominating conviction that, sooner rather than later, Russia would have to meet the full weight of a German attack. Leningrad stood second only to Moscow as a goal for this assault. Its defence was essential to Russia—a fact made plain by Germany's massive and protracted efforts to break down its defence. And only fifteen miles from Leningrad stood the fortified frontier of a country which owned an efficient army of nearly half a million men, controlled by a commander trained in Germany and always closely associated with the German General Staff. There can be no question that Mannerheim, the strongest man in Finland, was a serious menace to the security of Leningrad and also of Murmansk. Nor is it really open to question that Stalin, the realist, entirely misjudged the way in which the Finnish people

would react to a Russian attack. The French Republican armies in the early days of the French Revolution started with such hopes and encountered such rebuffs.

On what the Russian presumption was based we do not know; certainly their Finnish quisling, Kuusinen, proved a hollow deceit. The Finns have much reason for not loving the Russians—their mutual encounters date a long way back—and they may very justly have estimated that Finnish independence had more to gain from a distant German protector than a Russian one at its gates. However that may be, Finland stood firm against Russia, with enthusiastic encouragement from the nations of the West. It did not strike these latter that their own cause might be jeopardized if Finland attacked Leningrad from the rear while Germany attacked it from the front, and also if Finland assisted Germany in barring them from Murmansk.

The first Russian advances (conducted, it is said, with bands and banners to the front) were met with an implacable fire, and Russia had to deploy some measure of her real strength to overcome a Finnish army of burning patriotism, which stirred the sympathies of all the sentimental and uncomprehending West. It is chastening to reflect that we sent munitions and might have sent forces to Finland to help her in making Russia more vulnerable to German attack. So utterly did we fail to comprehend the magnitude of our task in saving Western Europe from German dominance.

Those were days in which a sense of reality seemed to be entirely absent from our minds. France (and much non-military opinion in Britain) was bemused with the idea that in the West this war might be a "white war," ending in the discomfiture of Germany by some process of attrition which would cost her Western enemies neither blood nor tears nor sweat. I can myself remember the strength of this illusion in the highest quarters of Paris not many days before the panzers struck. Even when Norway was invaded, the presumption of Germany was regarded as insane. We would do well to remember what the highest authorities in London said about that unexpected stroke, since it may help us to appreciate the value of the realism with which Stalin steered his ruthless but patriotic course. It took the crash of France, like a great tree riven by lightning, to make us truly conscious of the storm which compassed us about. In the Kremlin the sense of danger never slumbered nor slept.

It is part of Britain's age-long semi-detachment from Europe to be slow in measuring the true significance of European movements and events in which her destinies are enwrapped ; but it is now of critical importance that her leaders should read correctly the signals of the times. A great new light is burning in the East of Europe, and many think its redness a danger to the old established societies in which they live. Is it possible to say with confidence what that light portends ?

CHAPTER VIII

THE SOVIET REVOLUTION WITHIN

The triumph of Communism at home and abroad is no longer the master object of the Soviet State. Its dogmas have been profoundly modified in Russia itself, and Russian foreign policy is mainly concerned with the pursuit of national security and interest. The disbandment of the Comintern is therefore more than an empty gesture ; in common with many other significant changes, such as the Stakhanovite movement, the merging of the political commissars in normal Army life, and the recognition of the Church, it reflects a transformation of aim as well as method in Russian national life.

The Soviet Union is now a multinational State of a hitherto untried type, and it has unquestionably given rise to a wide and glowing patriotism which unites its various races and territories with a bond of genuine strength. Every branch of the Red Army has its local patriotism which the new constitution has recognized ; but every fighting and toiling Russian is conscious of a new inspiration which the Revolution has brought to birth, and Holy Russia, their great and beneficent Fatherland, means more at this hour to Russians of all types than it ever has before. The new national anthem has clinched that very important change.

The Russia of 1944 is therefore a State of an entirely different order from that which made its peace with Germany in 1917 and with Poland in 1919. An immensely powerful directing mind and will are responsible in the main for that. But the ideology of the Revolution has not disappeared without trace. It is still a living power in Russia itself, and outside Russia a

useful, though hidden, instrument. The new imperialism and the older communism are not at odds except where fanatics of the early Trotsky type, at home and abroad, are pursuing their ancient hates. The two forces are blended in a national attitude towards the outside world which draws some part of its strength from each ; and Russia's significance as a World Power cannot be justly appraised without attention to both. I shall therefore attempt to review very broadly the internal effects of the Revolution in this chapter, and its external effects in the next.

I must, however, begin by explaining that I have never been to Russia and therefore base these views entirely upon the judgment of men who have done so, during the war as well as before it, and also upon books. Of these the works of Sir Bernard Pares and Sir John Maynard have impressed me most ; but there is a vast output of literature on Russia from which the foreigner may draw as best he can his own impressions of the truth. Here are mine for what they are worth.

The New Revelation

The Russia of the early twentieth century does not seem to have differed in any important essential from that of the early nineteenth, the setting of Tolstoy's *War and Peace*. The nineteenth century certainly showed growing unrest, but the people who battled so bravely, yet so inefficiently, against Germany from 1914 to 1917 lived in much the same conditions as those whom Tolstoy unforgettably depicts. The leading characteristics of that Russia were the comparative smallness of the governing class, the serf-like condition of the peasantry, and the lack of any graduated middle-class to bridge the intervening gulf. Luxury and high culture among the few ; for the many an unchanging routine of subordination to climate, land and rulers, and a very low standard of life.

This is how Sir John Maynard, who knew Russian conditions well and could measure them by Asiatic as well as Western European standards, described the existence of the Russian masses before the upheaval of 1917 :—

"The peasant life was overshadowed by a sense of destiny against which he must struggle—if he elected to struggle—in vain. Not only was he in the power of the State and of the landowner, and bound to obey them in their incalculable demands, but another great impersonal force held him in its inexorable grip. The power of the land, and of all those institu-

tions of the commune inseparably bound up with the power of the land, crushed him relentlessly, unless he yielded an absolute obedience."¹

The Revolution has not, it is true, modified the autocratic character of the Russian machine of government. It has wrought the changes which all observers note with a scientific disregard of sentiment and of the cost which individuals, groups or classes might have to pay. But within the iron limits of the political and economic dogma which it has imposed it gives free scope to debate upon its objects and its efficiency. Government in Russia is seen at last to have a purpose other than the welfare of the few; and that, for the people as a whole, has worked a moral and spiritual rebirth. The Russian peasant, despite his servitude to nature and his contempt of human life, is a spiritual creature; and the revolution has given him a regenerating faith which seems now to be blending with a new and much needed idealism in the Orthodox Church.

Englishmen have had some sense of power over the world about them, however small, for centuries past; and they never lost it altogether, even in the factories, when our industrial revolution was at its worst. The Russian peasant has gained that sense for the first time in this century, and Sir John Maynard summarizes the transfiguring result in a memorable paragraph:—

"Let us picture to ourselves the sense of release which the ending of this burden of fatality must bring with it. Amid all the pseudo-philosophical jargon which Marxian studies have imported into Russia there was one gospel intelligible to the ordinary man and comparable in its redeeming influences with the half-dozen great ideas which from time to time have changed the current of men's lives. It was the idea that man could make his own history. Fate was no longer fate. In that thought lies the dynamic that has set Russia free. Not for the first time faith has moved mountains."²

The same sense of regeneration and release has been described in another way by a young Russian playwright who was killed in one of the German air-blitzes upon Moscow. The play (which was staged for a run in London) is called *Distant Point*—a small station on the Trans-Siberian Railway, Vladivostok—2,000 Km.; Moscow—8,000 Km.; somewhere remote in the wilderness. I take the quotation from Flight-Lieutenant Hubert Griffith's stimulating book, *This is Russia*:—

"In one of its scenes an oldish man gets up and begins to make a speech. He says, 'In the olden days (meaning Tsarist days) I was a pointsman

¹ *The Russian Peasant and Other Studies*, p. 31.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 31-2.

and signalman on this railway . . . Now I'm still a pointsman and signalman on the same railway . . . But——'

"And an opponent of his who is having a furious argument with him and trying to get him worked up to steam heat, says jeeringly, 'Well, what's the difference? What's the difference?'

"And the older man, after thinking a moment, says slowly, 'Now the line and the signals and the railway—and the whole country as far as its far boundaries—belongs to *me*; and I am a part of it. *That's* the difference . . .'¹

The Mechanization of Russia

Side by side with this deep spiritual change, there have been vast material changes, for the first time bringing technical efficiency into Russian life. The ruthless scientific upheavals by which they have been made, the confiscation of property, the break-up of families, the devastating famines, the iron system of control, the conscription of millions for work far from their homes in labour camps, would not have been possible in any European countries which have known what freedom is; but Russia has never known it, and the changes there, however drastically imposed, have produced beneficial results. One is mechanization; the speed with which the Russian peasant has learnt to tend and drive machines is one of the unexpected events which have made mincemeat of German expectations. Another is the exploitation of Russia's almost unlimited natural wealth. Yet a third is the growth of industry. Russia is passing through an industrial revolution at lightning speed, and altering profoundly the balance between her urban and agricultural population. The growth of towns is a change that influences the future of a country so deeply that I will quote a ten years' comparison taken from Mr. B. H. Sumner's *Survey of Russian History*:—²

			1926	1939
Total population	..	..	147,000,000	170,500,000
Urban	..	..	26,300,000	55,900,000
Rural	..	..	120,700,000	114,000,000

The percentages are also worth recording:—

			1926	1939
Urban	..	..	17.9%	32.8%
Rural	..	..	82.1%	67.2%

¹ *This is Russia*, pp. 50-51.

² *Survey of Russian History*, p. 386.

Clearly there is growing up in Russia a powerful urban class which will greatly influence, as the growth of cities always does, her future political development.

There is no need to burden these pages with statistics of the other innumerable changes which the industrial revolution has wrought. Very few outside Russia had any conception of them when Germany invaded Russia ; and it is not the Germans only who have been astounded by the results.

A New Multinational State

Thirdly and finally, the Soviet Revolution has produced in the Union an entirely new type of multinational State. The constitution has been greatly modified, even in the last few months, and no one unendowed with miraculous second sight can pretend to say how far it points to democratic freedom either for the individual or for the component State. Russian democracy is entirely different from ours, but it exists. The main principles of the national organization are not for debate, and their application is entrusted to a framework of executive officers whose authority is immense. The power of Moscow and the single-party system admit of no challenge so far as national policy is concerned. But local government is a reality within that broad and firmly welded frame, and there is a freedom in such matters as language, culture and education which makes for true democracy in a Russian form. Stalin seems to be extending those freedoms, and they will doubtless continue to develop, whatever the future of the central Soviet regime.

That, in any case, is Russia's business, though the outcome may be considerably affected by her relations with other Powers, and more particularly with those whose alliance is necessary to prevent a revival of militarism in Germany. What concerns us foreigners is the character and coherence of the Soviet regime.

There is, in the first place, little reason for fearing or hoping (as Germany did) that the Soviet Union will break up. It has one great advantage which it inherited from the Tsars—that is, an enormous patrimony, whose smaller and remoter components had been incorporated in the Russian system for the better part of a century. Russia might have fallen to pieces in the civil wars produced by the outbreak of the Revolution ; strong attempts were made with foreign help to achieve that result ; but they were decisively overcome. There was also a revolution

in Transcaucasia which was mercilessly suppressed ; but it seems to have left no aftermath. Stalin himself is a Georgian, who understands the local patriotisms now fused in the patriotism of the whole. Germany nursed great hopes of anti-Soviet movements, especially in the Ukraine and Caucasus ; but despite much sedulous incitement, nothing of the kind matured.

The Soviet Union, in fact, bears no resemblance to the vast aggregations of territory which acknowledged for a brief moment in history the military overlordship of an Alexander or a Genghis Khan. It is not a personal union like theirs ; it has held through great vicissitudes and is cemented not only by the strength but by the value to each State of a powerful and highly centralized administrative machine. The economic interdependence of its members is very great and certain to increase, even while cultural and, perhaps, military autonomy tends the other way. Above all, it is imbued throughout with a deep and unifying devotion to a common Fatherland ; every constituent State has its share in that greatness and knows itself the greater because it does not stand alone.

Secondly, it is of great significance that the Soviet Union constitutes the greatest aggregation of territory, man-power and natural wealth under systematic central control that the world has seen since the decline and fall of Rome. That fact would be momentous on the ground of power alone ; but it has another facet, namely, that Russian resources combine with Russian character to deter the Union from military adventure with conquest for its aim. Unlike Germany, Russia, despite the vastness of her population, has no need for further *Lebensraum*.

There are people who derive from history the view that all revolutions pursue a broadly similar development—from social upheaval to military dictatorship, and from military dictatorship to aggressive war. If this be true, Russia will produce her Napoleon, and Europe will have small hope of peace. Historical parallels, however, need careful scrutiny ; and it does not seem to follow that because Russia has had a revolution she must infallibly set out, like France and Germany, to conquer and dominate a whole continent.

There were three main causes which produced an aggressive imperialism in revolutionary France. One was the fact that she was surrounded by powerful enemies bent on stamping her revolution out. It is possible to trace some parallel to that state

of affairs when the Russian Revolution was in its infancy ; but such as it was (and it was very slight), the parallel has ceased to exist. None of us is going to try to force a counter-revolution upon Russia when, largely through her aid, we have Germany at our feet. Another factor in revolutionary France was the poverty of the nation and the bankruptcy of the State. France had small resources and needed all the wealth she could command in Europe, Asia or America by military strength. Russia, in contrast, is not merely solvent but the owner of enormous untapped wealth. Finally there was the military genius of Napoleon, and in the French people itself a certain thirst for military adventure and glory descended from the past. Russia may yet produce her Napoleon, but there is nothing in her historic character or present circumstances that seems likely to foster military leadership of that stamp.

The ruling passion in Russia before the war was self-development. The ideal of a country equipped to raise the life of its own people, by direction of their energies and exploitation of their wealth had gripped her with extraordinary force. Much of what was then achieved has since been destroyed, but Government and people alike are setting out to rebuild with equal fervour wherever the Germans are thrown out. Russia's capacity for internal development is so various and so vast that it may well absorb her energies for generations to come. The evangelistic fanaticism of the early Revolution might conceivably produce the militant fervour which carried the French armies across Europe and ultimately to their calvary in the Russian snows ; but Russian character, Russian wealth, and the pride of Soviet Russia in self-development, seem at present to point decisively against the Napoleonic parallel.

I conclude therefore with a strong conviction that while the Revolution has transfigured Russian life, it need not make for an aggressive policy on the part of future Russian Governments. The Russian people have plenty to do at home, and a pride in doing it which was never manifested, a century and a half ago, by revolutionary France. Their character also is unaggressive ; and despite their ruthlessness towards human life, they have a sense of humour and a certain broad humanity which seem very kindred to us. In no country are the Pickwick Papers more widely and appreciatively read.

International policy is not, however, necessarily governed by

considerations such as these, and Soviet Russia is giving signs of pursuing a foreign policy disquieting to friendly States. To this external aspect of the Russian Revolution I now pass.

CHAPTER IX

SOVIET RUSSIA AS A WORLD POWER

Russia has often influenced the history of Europe to great effect ; but her intervention has generally been transitory, and all her excursions between the Napoleonic wars and this have ended in defeat. She is now a World Power in a far more effective sense, and there are many who regard her in that guise with suspicion and anxiety.

It is a military maxim that generals should endeavour to read the enemy's mind with the sympathetic understanding called "putting yourself in the other fellow's shoes." That process is no less indispensable between Allies, and history shows that it is often no less difficult. I have done my best to apply it to Russia without political bias, and have now to estimate how her influence will affect the peace. One thing at least is certain, that if we fail to prevent the growth of mutual suspicion between the chief Allies, as we did in 1918, the peace we make will not be a lasting peace. Communism may conceivably produce a form of imperialism in its own image—by which I mean a contempt of other nation's rights in pursuance of its own—if the chief Allies cannot agree upon the fundamental principles of the peace settlement. They failed to do so from 1918 onwards, and we know the consequence.

The Wind of Revolution

Disagreement is already on the stocks, as Hitler has observed, because there are forces in Soviet Russia which the Western world has reason to suspect. The first and most important arises from the fact that Russia now, like France in the Napoleonic era, is a revolutionary State. The transfiguration of Russia in the last twenty years is due to the triumph of a social gospel which has released long pent up energies and given the Russian people an entirely new attitude to life. It is true that at the beginning of this century Russia lay far behind the major

countries of the West in social and political development, and no less true that revolution on the Russian model would be disastrous to States with complex economies shaped by different natural conditions, different needs, and a different attitude towards life. That is no reason why Britain and the United States should not co-operate with Russia ; but it would be foolish to pretend that it sets no difficulties in the path.

Fear of revolution is not a reactionary state of mind in prosperous and well established States. It is felt by many circles of men in Western Europe who are as conscious as others of the need for wide reform but anxious lest real progress should be marred or nullified by violence ; and it is very strong in all the centres of American business life. The ideal of social justice, by which I mean the desire that all should share more fairly in the good things of life, is working in all peoples with increasing force ; and it applies to the difference of status between peoples, rich and poor, as well as to that between the citizens, rich and poor, of individual States. It is thus the economic counterpart of the ideal of political emancipation which spread over nineteenth century Europe from the embers of the revolution in France, despite the efforts of the Holy Alliance to stamp them out after Napoleon's defeat.

England set her face against reaction in the nineteenth century with warm concurrence from the United States. It was then that Canning, supported by Monroe, called in the New World to redress the balance of the Old ; and the New World had prevailed in most of Western Europe before the nineteenth century closed. Is the order now to be reversed, the West resisting winds of change which have gathered fresh strength in the East ?

For my part, I do not believe it will—in Britain, at any rate. Legitimism, as the Emperors of the Holy Alliance called their creed of autocratic right, has no more substance as an economic doctrine than as a political one. Britain is always changing. Privilege unearned and undeserved is out of keeping with her present mood, and all that remains of it will pass. Two revolutions which long preceded that in France gave her a system of government, greatly broadened since, which moves with the spirit of the age and makes reforms without upheaval as that spirit may direct. She prefers to keep the good in her historic structure while remedying abuse. But reaction is entirely foreign to her spirit except in emergencies such as war, when her being is at stake.

If, therefore, she falls into disagreement with Soviet Russia, it will not be on the anti-revolutionary grounds which governed her during the Napoleonic wars and for a short period after the last. Her people will not suffer it, and they will be wise in that, since it is idle to suppose that revolutionary thought can be stemmed in this century by the ostracism of Russia any more effectively than it was stemmed a century ago by the ostracism of France. The demand for social justice is a power which cannot be stopped, and to which temporary repression gives greater explosive force. In this matter every country will reap what its leaders may sow while power is in their hands. No nation can hope to stifle change by isolating itself from other countries where change has taken place, however violent. *Quisque suos patimur Manes*—our destinies are what we make them in the light of our own past.

That Russia is a revolutionary country is therefore no reason at all for attempting to create a *cordon sanitaire* about her frontiers or our own, provided—and this is the essential point—that she respects the right of other peoples to order their own affairs and does not organize within them a propaganda inconsistent with that right.

Communist Propaganda

Here is one of the stumbling-blocks in Russia's relations with other friendly States, and it would serve the cause of Anglo-Russian friendship ill not to face it squarely. It is a fact that Russia has organized subversive agencies within the bosom of other States; and it is also a fact that her policy towards some weaker States seems to be inconsistent with the independence which she admits to be their right. Both issues are fundamental, and whole-hearted co-operation between Britain and Russia will be found impossible, if the differences to which they have already given rise are not effectively dispelled.

I will take the question of internal propaganda first.

Stalinite Russia has moved a long way from the Marxian canons preached like dogmas in the early furies of the revolution from twenty to thirty years ago; and it is well that she has done so, since political fanaticism may be as dangerous to peace as religious fanaticism in the past. Tolerance is one of the essential conditions of world-peace, and it is quite as necessary with economic and political formulae as with religious ones.

The original watchword of the Soviet Revolution was the Marxian formula, "From each according to his capacity ; to each according to his needs." The counter-revolution in Russia (remarkable in the fact that the change was made, not by anti-revolutionaries, but in the heart of the revolution itself) has openly and decisively altered the last word in that formula from "needs" to "deserts." That is a fundamental change, and Stalin's spectacular achievements derive from it. It is also, I believe, unquestionable that the Russian leaders of to-day are much more deeply concerned with the reconstruction and expansion of prosperity in their own country than with the spreading of Communism abroad. The dissolution of the Comintern was not an empty gesture ; and if the activities of that organization still survive, as they unquestionably do, they seem to have a national and imperialist character very different from the past.

But that change does not dispose of the deep suspicion with which Communist propaganda is regarded in the Western world. The cells which it has planted in other countries are in direct and definite breach of the principle, proclaimed by Stalin himself, that no country has the right to interfere with another country's internal affairs. Complaint against Soviet Russia on this head does not rely on theory alone. It can quote the notorious fact that the Communist agencies in Britain, France and the United States did all they could to sabotage the war effort of those countries until Russia herself became involved. We cannot easily forget or forgive a policy so cynical and so unprincipled employed to undermine us when we were fighting alone and against great odds for our very lives.

This, then, is a point on which we must at all costs be plain, since it goes to the root not only of our own relations with Russia but of international relations as a whole. Russia can justly say that when the process started twenty-five years ago, Britain herself was taking sides against the Revolution and therefore interfering (though openly) with Russian internal affairs. She can also say that every great country has its Secret Service, which seeks intelligence by means not openly avowed. But the time has long past since British opinion could be brought to favour any action hostile to Russia's internal regime, and secret agencies are not organized by us to subvert the institutions or trouble the internal peace of countries with which we are not at war.

There are countries less well-knit than Britain where such activities may do great internal harm. We have no reason to quarrel with Communist agencies in our midst provided they keep within the law of the land, but we do not as a nation take kindly to the presence of organizations whose first and foremost loyalty is not to this nation and its King. It was for political reasons, not for doctrinal ones, that five hundred years ago we firmly made an end of Rome's pretensions to power over Englishmen, and we will always turn against any such pretensions in the future, by whomever they be advanced.

Our Labour movement and Trade Unions are English in many distinctive ways, but in nothing more rootedly so than in their dislike of political activities promoted with foreign funds. The Zinoviev Letter of 1923 was not in itself a very serious affair ; but it touched a sensitive nerve and told considerably against the Ministry which had to answer for it. Admiration for Russian achievement and sympathy with Russian social aims are strong in our working class to-day, and there is no doubt at all that the Anglo-Russian Alliance is popular ; but that sentiment, warm as it is, would not survive a conviction that Russian policy was inconsistent with the principle of "living and letting live" which governs our own way of life and our attitude towards that of other nations as adult as ourselves.

It is therefore of great importance that Russia should not misconceive the immense goodwill which she now commands in a great majority of the British people. The interests of all sections of our society are much more closely dovetailed than they seem to be when party controversy becomes acute. The fear that British credit might be shaken was very possibly exaggerated in 1931 ; but the solidity with which a great majority of our people voted for its maintenance in the General Election of that year would be shown again to-day when savings are much more widely shared. The Left in this country has hitherto been consistently hostile to infiltration by Communist cells ; and though the process of infiltration has gained to some extent from the widely felt admiration of Russia's achievements in social reform as well as in the war, there would be overpowering reaction against it if Communist activities promoted with foreign funds showed any sign of threatening our credit or of exerting a subversive influence upon our domestic affairs.

Russian Imperialism

It is not, however, in the field of domestic politics that differences between ourselves and Russia are most likely to arise. We are an independent people, and foreign influence upon our Parliamentary system will always defeat itself when it overplays its hand. Far more serious is the issue raised by Russia's dealings with the exiled Polish Government, since nothing bears more closely upon the maintenance of European peace than the relation to be established between the stronger and the weaker Powers. Revolutionary governments are invariably suspicious, and there has hitherto been little contact between the Soviet leaders and the outside world. But it is nevertheless most difficult to understand why Russia should be unwilling to settle the Polish question in co-operation with her chief Allies.

The details of the Polish question do not concern me here ; it will certainly have passed into a different phase before these pages see the light. I shall therefore waive all discussion of frontiers and of the formidable ethnographical problems which they involve. They are not in any case the main issue, and should not divert attention from it. The main issue is much broader, for it is nothing less than the organization of Europe after the war. There is already much talk of zones of occupation in Germany, and these are sure to become spheres of influence with possibly far-reaching results. The principles for which Britain is bound to stand will be discussed in a later chapter ; but they must find acceptance in Russia if they are to be applied with lasting effect, and there is a good deal in the present attitude of Russia to justify disquiet.

Poland has unquestionably to decide without equivocation whether her future lies in friendship with Russia or with Germany. She has veered and temporized with good reason in the past. I have been told, for instance, on indisputable authority that she offered to take common action with France to prevent the remilitarization of the Rhineland in 1933 ; but neither France nor Britain was then prepared to intervene, and Marshal Pilsudski opted for an understanding with Germany in the following year. That was an understandable but unhappy choice, since Germany was already preparing for war while Russia wanted peace ; and it reached a climax of un wisdom when Poland used the German occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1939 to secure territory for herself. Poland's existence as an independent State will always

be precarious so long as she is wedged between two Powers of immensely greater military strength, and Russia is making no unreasonable demand when she insists that Poland shall choose decisively in favour of herself. But a great deal turns upon the implications with which Russia besets that choice.

It seems to me unreasonable to suggest that Russia is not entitled to create a sphere of influence about her Western frontiers in the sense attached to the Monroe doctrine last century by the leaders of the United States. In consultation with Madison and Jefferson, President Monroe declared in 1923 that even at the risk of war the United States would henceforth resist interference by any European Empire with the peoples of the American continent. His declaration was supported by Canning, who thereby placed behind it for a century the power of the British Fleet. This was in literal fact to proclaim the whole American continent, north and south, a sphere of influence under guardianship of the United States. With one short-lived exception during the American Civil War, American and British policy, with the Royal Navy behind it, kept all the states of America free from interference by any external Power.

The Atlantic is a considerable moat, and the sphere of influence necessary to protect Russia against Germany upon the West cannot unfortunately be marked by any boundary so definite. But given the reabsorption by Russia of the Baltic States and the division of East Prussia between Poland and herself, Russia must infallibly seek security in the region of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Rumania as the young American Union sought it in the other regions of its own great continent. Let us remember, moreover, that the Monroe doctrine had what would now be called ideological implications of a very definite stamp. Under it, America was to be democratic and (Canada apart) republican from end to end of the Continent.

Russian policy in the frontier regions essential to her security can therefore claim respectable precedent in the practice both of Britain and the United States, and it is necessary that we should not burke that patent fact. It reminds me of a lively exchange of compliments between the French and Russian delegations to the Genoa Conference in 1922. Monsieur Barthou, who led for France, found it necessary at one of the meetings of the full conference to denounce a series of social misdemeanours committed by the Soviet Government, such as the repudiation of Tsarist Russia's debts. Monsieur Chicherin, for Russia, coun-

tered very neatly with an equally imposing series of precedents drawn from the conduct, a century or so before, of revolutionary France. Monsieur Barthou, academician and skilled debater as he was, did not shine in that exchange; and we for our part had best remember the Monroe Doctrine when Russia's desire for a similar sphere of influence is being too hastily denounced.

But Russia cannot cite the Monroe doctrine—and this is the vital point—as a precedent for action inconsistent with the independence of smaller States. British sea-power, which backed the Monroe Doctrine, was never used to diminish the freedom of any adult State; and American policy pursued an equally tolerant course. This is all the more necessary in central Europe to-day because Russian civilization and the Russian way of life are widely different from those of Europe's central and western States.

There is a line of deeply rooted sentiment derived from history, race, religion and culture which cannot be drawn with exactness across the map of Europe but which does, in fact, divide the European nations into two distinctive families of a Western or an Eastern stamp; and there are also differences between the individual nations in each family which run extremely deep. No system of security that ignores or outrages these differences can last, since none of the distinctive nations of Europe will undergo the domination of another without becoming an unsettling and ultimately explosive force. Hitler's New Order trampled on that sentiment, and we can see the result.

"The sentiment of a people" (wrote Admiral Mahan) "is the most energetic element in national action. Even when material interests are the original exciting cause, it is the sentiment to which they give rise, the moral tone which emotion takes, that constitutes the greater force."

If Russia does not respect such sentiment beyond her borders, she will not keep the loyalty and friendship of her western neighbours, however great her strength; nor can she hope to mitigate the pains of domination over them by extending to them the cultural and limited autonomy which is now being applied to the republics of the Soviet Union itself. Nations with a proud history behind them, who know what independence means, must breathe their own air and shape their own way of life if they are to be consenting and participating members in a stable system of peace—particularly where, as on Russia's western frontiers,

distinctions of race, religion, history and culture make the spirit of nationality imperious and intense.

Upon this principle, whatever it may cost, Britain is bound to stand to the utmost of her strength, since it is the vital principle of the British Commonwealth. She would be false to her own history and the faith which it has given her, if she were to compromise on it ; and she would also lose her status as the only Power round which Western Europe can reintegrate its life. The Pax Britannica which gave the world immunity from widespread war for ninety-nine years after Waterloo was not based solely upon British naval supremacy or on British wealth, though these were indispensable elements in it. Force would not have maintained it, however great, had not Britain been a liberal-minded Power with a free economy and a never-failing desire to respect and to promote the freedom of other national States.

The alliance between her and Russia is based upon such solid common interests that it would be tragedy indeed were the two great Powers to disagree upon this cardinal point. The Russians are by nature lovers of peace, and so are we. They have as great an interest as we in preventing the love of war in twentieth century Germany from causing another holocaust. For that they need as much as we do an organization of the other European peoples which will share their peaceable purpose and complement their strength. But if that organization is not framed on principles which all the European nations, great and small, can honourably accept, some other Hitler will infallibly exploit it and range the world once more in internecine camps. Every western nation is watching British and Russian policy on the Polish issue with anxious eyes because it knows that in that complex issue the future of Europe is at stake.

CHAPTER X

EUROPE IN OUR TIME

Mr. Herbert Fisher's definition of European civilization as an inheritance of thought, achievement and religious aspiration applies to European communities in every continent and to European influence throughout the world. Europe's far-flung offshoots in the Americas, in Africa and in Australasia are an essential part of it, and so is the political and economic apparatus,

the network of transport and communication by land, sea and air, the mechanization of industry, the systems of law, the political and social ideals, the method of representative government, and the increasingly equalitarian principles governing the relation of man to man. These things have spread from Europe to all the corners of the earth, and they constitute the ruling factors of international life in our times.

The Growth of Nationhood

The texture of Europe itself is, however, even more complex than the common inheritance of culture, thought and scientific discovery which it has so widely diffused. When its peoples began to emerge from the welter of the age which saw the decline and fall of the Roman Empire, the barbarian invasions, the challenge of Islam, and the struggle between Church and State, they were already divided by differences of race and language into separate communities with distinctive characters; and these in due course evolved into individual conscious nationhoods. The beginning of the process is vividly described in a speech which Monseigneur Cauchon, the Bishop of Beauvais, addresses to Warwick, the English nobleman, in Bernard Shaw's play *Saint Joan*. The Maid of Orleans was certainly, though no doubt unconsciously, a nationalist; she wished the Goddams to return to their own country and France to be ruled by a French King. Monseigneur Cauchon inveighs against this "secular heresy" as perilous to the unity of Christendom.

"I have no sympathy" (he says) "with her political presumptions. But, as a priest I have gained a knowledge of the minds of the common people; and there you will find yet another most dangerous idea. I can express it only by such phrases as France for the French, England for the English, Italy for the Italians, Spain for the Spanish, and so forth. It is sometimes so narrow and bitter in country people that it surprises me that this country girl can rise above the idea of her village for its villagers. But she can. She does. When she threatens to drive the English from the soil of France, she is undoubtedly thinking of the whole extent of the country in which French is spoken. To her the French-speaking people are what the Holy Scriptures describe as a nation. Call this side of her heresy Nationalism if you will: I can find you no better name for it. I can only tell you that it is essentially anti-Catholic and anti-Christian: for the Catholic Church knows only one realm, and that is the realm of Christ's Kingdom. Divide that kingdom into nations, and you dethrone Christ. Dethrone Christ, and who will stand between our throats and the sword? The world will perish in a welter of war."

Monseigneur Cauchon may not have been as far-seeing in his own day, five hundred years ago, as Mr. Shaw makes him in the play; but the truth of the prophecy imputed to him is undeniable. It heralds a development of European nationalism which has given European culture its noblest fruits and is still so deeply rooted in the soil that a common European citizenship is far more difficult of attainment in our time than in the days of Imperial Rome.

Among citizens of the New World the clash of nationalities in the Old World is very widely feared and despised. They regard us in our ancient fastnesses as denizens of an unpeaceful twilight from which they have escaped. Mr. Wendell Willkie in the course of his swift *Odyssey* saw hope of better things and called his story of it *One World*. True that we must overcome the narrowing effects of nationalism in the political and economic field if we are to head towards a better world for all. True also that in the freedom of the New World men of many nationalities can be blended as in a mixing-bowl. But what is the power that achieves their mixing, and what is the result? Certainly not a sense of world-citizenship any stronger than Europe has attained—no, but nationalism in another shape and form; nationalism, in fact, as strong and self-regarding as in any of the ancient strains from which the new blend springs. And even so there are marked limits to the mixing which can be achieved, as witness the rooted difficulties which prevail when differences of colour intervene.

The Strength of Nationalism

No one with the most superficial knowledge of international relations in our time can be blind to the defects of nationalism, and it is the main purpose of this study to consider how British foreign policy can help to solve the radical problems which nationalism creates; but little help will be given to the world in its present agony by those who see nothing in nationalism except its defects. It is, let us make no mistake about it, an obstinate fact and also an unbreakable force.

Hitler believed that he could overcome it by military strength; we are now observing the results. Others of a more progressive turn of mind assure us that the metal of nationalism can be melted down and refashioned in larger ingots by the method of federalism. That method has demonstrably succeeded in fusing states and provinces without distinctive national traditions or

literatures, but it has so far signally failed to give harmonious cohesion to any recent grouping of clear-cut national types. One remarkable exception may be found in the United Kingdom of Great Britain ; but that is a small island in which the enormous English majority has long displayed an almost servile tolerance towards the Scottish and the Welsh. Between Great Britain and the larger part of Ireland the union has collapsed.

It is inconceivable to any forward-looking mind that human society should not progress towards some better system of political and economic organization than that presented by its present division into separatist and self-regarding national States ; but those of us who believe in responsible government with all the liberties which it connotes must honestly face the fact that national democracy as we understand it creates peculiar difficulties in that process of closer international co-operation which is necessary for the welfare of all.

Soviet Russia is a genuine democracy in certain senses of that term, but not in our political sense ; and it is a fact that where the Soviet Union has incorporated nationalities with a culture and independent tradition of their own, as in Caucasia, it met with fierce resistance which had to be ruthlessly overcome. Russia moreover is a semi-Eastern State with a vast Asiatic hinterland. Her civilization is different from that of Western and Central Europe. Apart from an aristocracy which has been largely liquidated, her own people have an outlook and standard of life which is still about halfway between those of the East and the West, and many of her smaller constituent races are only just beginning to be lifted by rigorous Soviet control from a state of primitive tribal isolation and barbarism. Western and Central Europe is peopled by nationalities of another type with a long and very different history behind them.

Democratic Nationalism

Democratic nationalism in Western and Central Europe may be said to date from the rapid fertilization of ideas scattered broadcast like new seed by the winds of the French Revolution. Napoleon, like Marshal Stalin in these days, had two immensely powerful forces at his command, the ancient French imperialism which threatened Europe with domination in the era of Louis Quatorze and the flame of revolutionary change which swept over the European peoples from the ruins of the Bastille. The

democratic nationalism engendered by that flame was temporarily blanketed by the forces of the Holy Alliance when he fell ; but it was never suppressed, and it became in different forms the main constituent of European history during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. One of its most potent apostles, President Wilson, came from the New World ; and in the peace settlement of 1919 it subdivided Europe into a larger number of independent national States than it had ever before contained.

It is idle to suppose that nationalism has lost any of its force under the iron heel of German militarism. So far from being weakened, it is stronger for the persecution it has endured. The deep-rooted resolve of every nation to shape its life in its own way, to resist dictation and control, to be the captain of its own soul, is at the very heart of the combined resistance which the Axis has provoked in all the peoples of progressive and distinctive culture throughout the world. It is also at the heart of the neutrality which a few have managed to preserve, with waning enthusiasm. The United Nations are united against their enemies ; but they are distinctive nations, great or small, and they are fighting side by side because of their nationhood. Their dominating motive is love of their own land, to preserve it or to win it back for freedom, so that it may call its soul its own. There is no hope of peace or economic progress if nationalism cannot overcome its narrower instincts ; but the association of peoples for common ends must be a free association, based on liberty of choice and tender in particular towards the pride of the less powerful, if it is to endure. No statesmanship will overcome the dangers of national particularism which does not understand the living force of it and respect it as an indispensable element in the civilization of our age.

A British Principle

I arrive, then, at one of the first principles to which British foreign policy must be constant, whatever winds may blow. Western and Central Europe, which will hold the keys of peace and war for many years to come, will never remain at peace under the domination of any single Power or of any group of Powers. Britain has always fought for her own freedom ; it is the air she breathes. She has created new and independent nations in other continents. Neither she nor the Commonwealth of which she is the heart will willingly part with that freedom

to any combination of nations, even of their own kin, and still less to any foreign Power or association of foreign Powers. What she demands for herself she must, within the limits of her own strength and their capacity, ensure to all. Imperialism, in the sense of domination, is the arch enemy of all for which she stands. No foreign policy that she pursues can give it aid or countenance.

CHAPTER XI

THE LAWS OF NAVIGATION

Certain laws which govern international relations have been established by long experience. In the light of those laws foreign policy is not unlike the navigation of a ship.

There are three essential features in the navigation of a ship. First come the laws of navigation, which are based upon the laws of nature and the known behaviour of the elements. These cannot be departed from without peril to the ship. Next comes the purpose or destination of the ship, which is fixed by the aim or interest of her owners. And lastly there is the process of navigation and the plotting of the course. That is for the captain with his officers and engineers, who must watch the weather, con their charts, steer their ship truly past shoals and reefs, and never overstrain her capacity or strength.

Foreign policy resembles navigation in all three points. Its laws are based upon the character of international society and the behaviour of nations as shown by experience, and those laws cannot be ignored without peril to national welfare and peace. Its character is fixed, like the purpose or destination of a ship, by the sentiments, aims and interests of the people it represents. Its conduct, finally, is entrusted to Ministers who should know, like seamen, what their ship can do, how she is likely to behave, and how best in those circumstances to bring her safely through the voyage which her owners have decreed.

I propose to discuss in this chapter the first of those three things—that is, certain laws or guiding principles in international affairs which we cannot safely disrespect. In the next I will come to purpose and destination as governed by interests, aims and ideals. The third—method, course and seamanship—will take the rest of the book.

The Burden of Power

First, then, let us recognize that force in reserve is as necessary for international peace as for the maintenance of law in any civilized State, because right is impotent without it. In both spheres there are limitations to the use of force, if it is to serve with effect for keeping the peace; but those who bear the burden it imposes must decide upon its use.

In national affairs, for instance, force cannot be used with effect to sustain a law which any considerable number of the citizens regard as unwise or unjust, unless it be wielded by a dictatorship. A good example is the failure of prohibition, despite a determined use of force, amongst the citizens of the United States. Likewise in international affairs power must show regard for the dignity, freedom and welfare of all peoples, if it is to be an effective instrument for peace. I would indeed go further and say that power must have behind it the conscience of the civilized world, if it is not to break in the hands of those who use it. There is a code of decency in international life which reflects itself in the conscience of all the Western democracies; and Britain can justly claim to have been governed by it throughout the period when her naval power was supreme.

It is therefore no addiction to "power politics" in the Nazi or Fascist or any other reactionary sense which convinces me that power systematically organized and maintained for the purpose of strangling war at its most likely source is indispensable to the preservation of peace. So long as the world contains a nation of great resources which idolizes war and hopes to gain by it, power will be necessary to restrain that nation from pursuing its fatal bent. Power is, in fact, as indispensable for the prevention of international war as for the maintenance of order within a single State.

I think that this necessity is much more generally accepted than it used to be; but there is a widespread idea that power must be diffused and subjected to the widest possible international control, if the nations which really possess it are not to abuse it for selfish ends. It is also believed that the nations are bound to group and align themselves in competitive and hostile camps if they are not combined in a system of security which covers the whole world.

I am deeply convinced that both those ideas are erroneous. The abuse of power is not to be prevented by subjecting the

nations who possess it to the control of nations who do not, because no system which confers power without responsibility ever works with success. It is the great nations who bear the responsibility, and they cannot discharge it without putting the lives and property of their citizens, their economic and social structure, and their national destinies at stake.

The power of committing a nation to war means power over all its citizens, industry, resources, savings, wealth. It means power to break up families, to cause bereavement and orphanage, blood, tears and sweat. It means power over heart and mind, power of life and death. It is therefore the widest and most terrible of all the powers wielded by a State. Freemen will give that power, in defence of freedom, to a Government which they themselves control, so that if its decisions are not their own, it can be differently directed or else dismissed. But they cannot give that power to a conference of sovereign Governments without depriving themselves of the sovereignty in virtue of which they are masters of their own fate.

If a number of sovereignties are merged by federation in a larger sovereignty, well and good ; the vital principle of responsible government stands fast. But there is assuredly no likelihood that the two greatest Powers in the world, Russia and the United States, will concede that power to a conference of many nations, none of which accepts a liability comparable with theirs ; nor is any such assignment of its sovereignty envisaged by any nation of the British Commonwealth.

This war has surely proved that whatever their nominal engagements, their long-range interests, their goodwill to nation who may already be fighting, and their own prospective peril should those nations be overcome, the two greatest Powers in the world do not enter a war unless their own security is unquestionably at stake. They may indeed bind themselves by alliance to go to war upon some future occasion, should they be persuaded that the special purpose of the alliance accords with their vital interests ; and so may the nations of the British Commonwealth, which all (excepting Eire) went to war without compulsion in 1939. But they will keep the decision in their own hands, to be taken by themselves as they, and not others, judge right.

This freedom is all the more essential because so few nations are capable of undertaking, in any practical sense, a universal obligation for the maintenance of peace. When Germany is

defeated, there will in fact be three, and only three—Britain, Russia and the United States. Other nations will be able to contribute to security in their own neighbourhood with the limited means which they possess; but only the three nations which I have named will have military resources on the scale and of the character necessary for war outside their own neighbourhoods, in any ocean or continent.

The issue can therefore be reduced to simple terms. Will the people of Britain or Russia or the United States be prepared to put the lives of their peoples and all their resources for war under the control of a conference of nations empowered by a covenant to order general war or the threat of general war against any nation or group of nations which threatens peace? The answer is—in theory, perhaps; in practice, certainly not.

Mr. Walter Lippmann has recently pointed out that the argument about American foreign policy in the United States is tending to fix upon universalism or isolationism as exclusive alternatives and that his country cannot have an effective foreign policy until it finds some practical compromise between the two extremes, which are both insidious methods of evading disagreeable facts. A similar realism is even more essential in Britain, because even more depends upon the part she plays in the coming settlement. Europe is the crux. If the United States declines to accept any specific commitments for the maintenance of an equilibrium in Europe, the peace will be greatly weakened but not necessarily lost. If Britain declines them, no equilibrium will come into being, much less continue to exist.

Universalism is an evasion of this reality because it gives, as the League of Nations did, a false impression that the great majority of nations can maintain peace by sheer strength of moral sentiment, even though none of them is prepared to face the ultimate challenge of force.

The history of the Twenty Years' Truce is surely proof enough that neither moral condemnation nor economic sanctions will restrain a determined aggressor unless those who have the military power are prepared to use it in the last resort. The strength of any universal system must therefore depend upon those who have the military power. They cannot diffuse their responsibility over a wide society of nations of which the vast majority are powerless without their help.

How, then, is substance to be given to the co-operation of the three world Powers? It is tempting to say that they will

co-operate on general terms within a comprehensive international assembly, which will decide when the three great nations are to stake their combined power—that is, the lives of their citizens and all other resources they possess—for the maintenance of peace. But it is against proved experience to assume that the justice of such international decisions will be accepted as self-evident, when the emergency is on them, by the people of Britain or Russia or the United States.

They can with due sincerity bind themselves to act together if certain circumstances arise of which the danger is compelling and self-evident to each. If so, they should conclude an alliance on definite terms with those specific objects in view. They cannot, I submit, with any sincerity give a blank cheque on the lives of their citizens and all their resources to a general assembly of nations whose diagnosis of danger to themselves they may not regard as compelling and self-evident in every circumstance.

We must, therefore, not blind ourselves to the fact that the future welfare and peace of the world will depend upon "power politics", and that the States which have the power will not delegate sovereignty over their destinies to States which have not. The great States must accept their responsibility and be honest enough with themselves to think it out. Two problems in particular they must face—that of the balance of power, and that of the rights of weaker States. There is nothing wrong in power as such; it is indispensable to law and peace. What those who have it must, if possible, agree upon is the code of right which they will use it to enforce.

The Balance of Power

The "balance of power", like "power politics", is a conception very widely denounced. I am not clear why. In essence the principle of the balance of power simply means that the world shall not be dominated by a single over-powerful State. If that is to be avoided, effective power must be shared between a number of States, so that none predominates. We have seen that States which have the power cannot with sincerity submit themselves to an assembly of many nations which can order them to war. What they can do is to agree with each other as to how their power will be used, so that each of them may play a part which its own citizens approve in guaranteeing the common interest. Each of them must then maintain the power required for its own

part. To do this is to establish a balance of power. There is no other practical way of preventing overlordship by a single State.

There are manifestly dangers in such a balance, however indispensable it may be, as there are dangers in every system yet devised by human intelligence. Wisdom consists in choosing that system which experience shows to offer the best hope and in neutralizing so far as possible the dangers by which it is beset.

By far the best hope in present circumstances seems to me to lie in a balance of power based upon genuine understanding and close co-operation for specific ends between the three great military Powers who will have played the principal part in defeating Germany, namely, Britain, Russia and the United States. But that balance, like every balance, has its dangers, which must be guarded against. One of these is the danger that the three great States, instead of co-operating for common ends, may fall apart into hostile camps. That is what Germany hopes.

Russia and the United States joined Britain in this war when, and not before, they were themselves attacked. Their association in war as co-belligerents was not a free choice, and it will certainly be exposed to serious strains when the compulsion of actual danger ceases to operate. Here again it is idle to hope that they will be kept together by common membership of a wider association of nations. They are the essential nucleus of any such association, and it will fall apart into camps if they fall apart into camps. To prevent this, the three great nations must be agreed, not only upon the general desirability of peace, but on the kind of peace they each desire ; and they must be satisfied that the results which flow from it are in accordance with their respective vital interests.

The essence of such an understanding, when once the necessities of war have passed, is that none of the three should pursue a one-sided policy of self-aggrandizement at the expense of the rest. Aggrandizement may take two forms, economic or political, and both are dangerous.

The temptation to economic self-aggrandizement will not be as strong in Britain as in the United States. Britain has no economic ambitions to the prejudice of other nations' prosperity ; the very contrary is, and has long been, the case. I should not be a convinced believer in the principle of Imperial Preference, if I did not consider it an indispensable factor in the just and stable balance which all three Powers should seek to create. Russia, for her part, is extraordinarily self-contained from the economic standpoint and will probably be concerned for a long period to

come in reconstructing her shattered industries and developing her vast estate.

There are many signs, on the other hand, that American economic policy may take a form conflicting with the requirements of stable peace. Not directly. It is inconceivable that the leaders of American business or the American people as a whole should consciously pursue a policy which they knew to be dangerous to peace. But they might undermine it indirectly nevertheless by recreating the conditions which caused so much misery in the middle period of the Twenty Years' Truce.

"It would be tragic indeed if the United States, after a period of renewed full participation in the world economy, were to permit another abrupt fall in the supply of dollars to disturb the recreated international trading and financial mechanism, whether wilfully through increased trade restrictions, carelessly through the misbehaviour of foreign investment, or involuntarily through the improper functioning of the domestic economy. Commercial and investment policies, however, are susceptible of intelligent determination and should no longer constitute such disturbing elements as in the past."¹

That quotation is from an official publication by the American Government, most hopeful in its tenour but countered by many inconsistent tendencies in Congress and elsewhere. American economic policy would never consciously create a danger of war ; but it might recreate the conditions which deliver countries to aggressive dictatorship, so that the friendly balance of power which is necessary for peace would once again be upset.

On the political side, all three great Allies are capable of making the balance insecure, but it is on Britain that the greatest responsibility will rest. If she fails by omission to create an alliance of the Western European Powers, backed by definite military commitments to prevent a recrudescence of German militarism, there will be no balance and Russia will be compelled to look for security to some policy which we shall assuredly dislike. There is also the opposite danger that suspicion of Russian Communism or Imperialism or both may lead Britain and America into policies which the Kremlin may regard as anti-Soviet, with equally undesirable results. Britain must act effectively as the leader in Western Europe and as the mediator between East and West, if the balance is to be kept.

¹ *The United States in the World Economy*, published by the United States department of Commerce, 1943, p. 25.

But here again the difficulties of the balance of power must not be used as arguments against it, since there is no alternative consistent with a stable peace. The only way in which the great nations which want peace can achieve any real assurance of it is by uniting together, so that they decisively outweigh the nations which have a liking for war, both in Europe and the Far East. That will remain the position for some decades to come, and there will be no escape from it. The three great nations which command the power do in fact unquestionably want peace, and they must bear the chief responsibility for it.

The European States

There is, however, another factor to be taken into account. Powerful and responsible as they may be, the great Powers cannot ensure peace by a policy of dictation to the rest. Europe will not suffer the domination of a group any more than it will suffer the domination of a single State. While therefore the great nations cannot divest themselves of their responsibility nor delude themselves by imagining that collective security guaranteed by all the nations constitutes an effective substitute for it, they must use their power with conscientious regard for the rights of the weaker nations and establish a system under which the weaker nations can play their part with dignity and effect.

If the weaker nations cannot expect to give orders to the stronger ones in matters of peace and war, they equally cannot be expected to accept orders in matters which affect their own vital interests or their right to combine with each other if they so choose. A balance of power established by agreement between the stronger nations will never remain stable if the smaller nations directly concerned are not also parties to it on terms which assure their independence and their self-respect.

The practical consideration in arrangements of this nature lies, I am sure, in the words "directly concerned". There are three types of nation to be taken into account, and any international system which is to weather the next few critical decades must give them their appropriate scope and status, with an equal voice in the order or regional group to which they belong.

The first type is the nation whose main concern is in itself and its immediate neighbourhood. The power which such nations can exercise is limited to that neighbourhood. Though the

action of the wider world beyond it may be of great importance to them, they cannot project their influence into it or undertake responsibility for its peace. Examples of this type in Europe are Norway and Sweden, the Central European nations, and the Balkan group.

The second type consists of the weaker European nations which have colonial possessions in other continents. These are not World Powers because they lack the resources necessary to that rank; but their responsibilities are not confined to their own neighbourhood and they are therefore specially interested in distant parts of the earth. The differences between members of this group are wide. Holland, Spain and Portugal were once World Powers. Belgium acquired her African possessions in the latter half of the nineteenth century through the enterprise of a King. Italy is a recent entrant to the group; but her ambitions seem unlikely to revive. Denmark also belongs to it. She no longer has colonial possessions in the West Indies, but she holds Greenland and is still in some ways closely related to Iceland, though the latter is no longer under the Danish Crown. Both Greenland and Iceland are important strategic positions in the sphere of naval and air power.

The third type consists of true World Powers, by which I mean the States whose resources and interests and whose strength as arsenals for war is such that they can influence the whole range of world affairs. There will, as we have seen, be only three in this class at the end of the present war. Russia will be the strongest military Power both in Europe and in Asia. She has vital interests in the Far East, and she lies close to the North American continent. The United States, with two-thirds the population of Russia, will be the next strongest military Power, with vital interests in Western Europe, North Africa, the Far East and, in all probability, the Middle East as well. Britain, with one quarter the population of Russia and one third that of the United States, is a World Power in virtue of her character, her great industrial resources, her Indian and Colonial Empires, and the well-trying links of interest, sentiment and ideal which bind her to the other nations of the Commonwealth. Her welfare is inseparable from that of every section of the earth, and the stability of the great political system she has founded is essential to the world's security from war.

There remain two great uncertainties, the destinies of France and Germany.

France has suffered disastrously in this war, and her population will not be more than half that of the German race ; but her powers of recuperation are immense, and her Empire has stood faithful to her throughout the ordeal. Her political influence will still be wide, though her material power will be greatly reduced, and her future will depend upon the character of the government which emerges from the chaos caused by Germany and the Vichy régime.

Germany's future, by contrast, will depend on other nations' actions more than on her own. She ceased to be a Colonial Power after the last war ; she will not be a World Power after this one. Yet she will be the kernel of the peace problem for a long age to come, not only for Europe but for the whole world ; and no nation but has an interest in the course which her history takes.

The very names of the European nations with their varied histories, their distinctive languages and cultures, and their individual stamps of mind, are enough to show that the European system of the future must give them all their proper scope and independence if it is to last. But the marked differences between their resources and range of interest are equal proof that their responsibility for maintaining peace must be graded in accordance with their strength.

Even a European system will not work effectively upon the principle that World Powers are to submit their destinies to the decisions of an international council or assembly in which they may be committed to war by a majority of members with incomparably less to contribute to the common security and, in many contingencies, incomparably less to lose. A world system, much less. The European and the world order which we establish after this war will be as delusive as the last if it is based on a principle of common obligation which makes no allowance for these patent variations in the power and character of States.

A World Picture

We arrive thus at the laws of navigation or guiding principles imposed by the facts of international life. For statesmen to ignore them would be as disastrous as for seamen to ignore the elements by which they are governed—the sea, the air, the heavens and the earth.

The first and foremost is the imperative necessity of combining the strength of the three great arsenal Powers, the British Commonwealth, the United States and the Soviet Union, in a common policy for promoting their own welfare, furthering that of other peoples, and keeping the peace. Everything can be done, if they hold together; nothing can be done, if they fall apart. Their political, economic and military co-operation is essential, not only to winning the war, but to repairing its ravages and building a stable international society out of the welter which it has wrought. None of them can evade its world responsibilities or pursue a policy which disregards the other two without endangering interests vital to itself.

This will be power politics, good or bad for the world and themselves according to the use to which their power is put. This will be a balance of power, good or bad for the world and themselves according to the spirit, co-operative or competitive, in which it is worked. There is no escape from the fact that the great Powers must constitute themselves the nucleus of reconstruction and peace, or fall into a rivalry which will make reconstruction impossible and cause another struggle for superior power to break out.

The second guiding principle is genuine regard for the rights of other States. International society as at present composed will not accept the domination of a single powerful State or of a trinity of powerful States. If proud nations with a long history behind them cannot play a part of dignity and freedom in the system which is set up, the system will collapse. In Europe more particularly, whence war is most likely to recrudescence, to pursue an Anglo-Russian-American variant of Hitler's New Order would be to run against the signals set by many centuries of history and ensure another century of strife.

The third guiding principle is, therefore, to create a world order in which all nations can play a definite part appropriate to their strength and vital interests. I will not reiterate the arguments which I have striven to adduce against any world system which apportioned to every State an equal measure of responsibility for the peace of the earth. The world system must be articulated so that specific provision is made against specific dangers by those who have the danger at their gates. The World Powers cannot keep the peace alone. They need a system in which they are regionally supported by definite obligations on the part of lesser States. Military commitments are essential—that

is, a definite undertaking on the part of all States to maintain their quota of the military power which is necessary for peace. But only World Powers can rightly incur world obligations. The lesser Powers can incur no more than local obligations, if the peace system is not to be an illusion from the start.

Regional Groups

It is, no doubt, a realization of these truths that has turned the thought of statesmen to the method of organization by regional groups. There are great advantages in that method for every type of State. No method, indeed, holds out a comparable promise of contentment and stability, provided that it is based upon a firm alliance between the major Powers which covers their relation to smaller ones. The special value of that method of articulation is that it can raise the status and reinforce the freedom of the smaller Powers without imposing responsibilities above their stature or beyond their strength. Small Powers cannot be World Powers. The Covenant of the League attempted to make them such, and that was one reason why it failed to work. But the other extreme of isolation in weakness is equally undesirable, since it exposes them to all the dangers of rivalry between the great.

Britain can claim that her own system demonstrates the value of the kindred group, and also that she has stood consistently for the freedom of small States. The British Commonwealth is a living expression of the dignity and vitality of nationhood ; it would not exist to-day, nor would it twice have prevented the enslavement of other nations by a great military Power, had it not given full play to the rights of autonomous nationhood within its own family and without.

The movements towards national emancipation which marked the nineteenth century in Europe and America were invariably supported (apart from one or two unhappy phases of policy in the Near and Middle East) by British strength and influence. We did not intervene to say how other peoples should govern themselves, but we constantly supported all movements towards national emancipation from foreign control—as witness our attitude towards the South American Republics, the liberation of Greece, Belgium and Italy, and indeed the movement towards German union, which was consummated with such disastrous effects. Our consistent devotion to the rights of nationhood was, therefore, not confined to the British family ;

we did our best to secure for other nations what we were exemplifying in our own growth as a Commonwealth.

Independent and egocentric nationalism is, on the other hand, a menace to peace. The history of this tortured century has shown how dangerous the isolation of small Powers is for themselves and every one else. Competition between the stronger Powers for influence over the weaker ones has long been a factor profoundly inimical to peace, and the inclusion of the smaller in a universal system has proved no cure for it. It is not necessary to give examples; the two World Wars of this century have arisen out of such disputes, and neutrality on the part of the weaker Powers is no solution of the problem which they create.

The League of Nations was, in principle, a negation of the rights of neutrality, but its weakness drove many of the smaller Powers into a neutrality which condemned them to impotence as arbiters of their own fate. It was a strange anomaly that the headquarters of the League should have been planted in the territory of a State whose policy of neutrality (however much justified by its geographical conditions and wise in its own interest) was in effect a denial of the cardinal principle of the Covenant.

The rights and responsibilities of all States, small and large, are surely capable of definition within an articulated international system which allows for regional groups. They should combine self-interest with the common interest, and independence with responsible membership of a broader association. So far as the smaller States are concerned, responsibility must be limited to their own neighbourhoods if it is to be real, and it must be framed in such a way as to meet what the States of a given neighbourhood regard as specific and common dangers.

Many will infallibly drift into neutrality again if they find themselves so situated that they cannot enter into arrangements for their own security without offending a powerful neighbour. Such was the position of Belgium and Holland between France and Germany, a position equally disastrous to themselves and to the great Western Powers, Britain and France, upon whom their security in fact depended. To Norway, Denmark, Luxemburg, Yugoslavia and Greece neutrality proved calamitous. Sweden, Portugal, Spain and Turkey have fared better in this war; but their immunity has been due to the strategic needs of the belligerents, and not to any power of their own to keep

war beyond their frontiers. There is in truth only one State in Europe which is really suited for neutrality, and that is a geographical citadel naturally protected by formidable mountain barriers—the Swiss Republic.

The smaller States must therefore find some solid middle ground between isolation and membership in a system of collective security so broad that, like the pre-war League, it gives no local guarantee against specific local dangers and forces them to temporize precariously between the great Powers. The Wilsonian League was a combination of extremes in which no solid middle ground was ever available. It divided Europe between a greater number of independent sovereignties than it had ever before contained and made those most unequal States all equal members of a worldwide association in which the obligations incurred by every member were not specific but universal. Mr. Churchill put his finger upon the weakness of this conception in his famous broadcast of 21st March, 1943. Speaking in the main of Europe, he said this :

“What is to happen to the large number of small nations whose rights and interests must be safeguarded? Here let me ask what would be thought of an army that consisted only of battalions and brigades and which never formed any of the larger and higher organizations like army corps. It would soon get mopped up. It would therefore seem, to me at any rate, worthy of patient study that side by side with the great Powers there should be a number of groupings of States or confederations which would express themselves through their own chosen representatives, the whole making a Council of great States and groups of States.”

This is the clearest statement so far made as to the kind of international structure which we are seeking to establish by agreement with our allies ; but Mr. Cordell Hull's broadcast address on Easter Day, 1944, is consistent with Mr. Churchill's main points :

“However difficult the road may be, there is,” he said, “no hope of turning victory into enduring peace unless the real interests of this country, the British Commonwealth, the Soviet Union and China are harmonized, and unless they agree and act together. This is the solid framework upon which all future policy and international organization must be built. It offers the fullest opportunity for the development of institutions in which all free nations may participate democratically, through which a reign of law and morality may arise, and through which the material interests of all may be advanced. But without an enduring understanding between

these four nations upon their fundamental purposes, interests and obligations to one another, all organizations to preserve peace are creations on paper, and the path is wide open again for the rise of a new aggressor."¹

This is less definite than Mr. Churchill's broadcast upon the role and status of the smaller Powers, but its principle and purpose are clearly the same. So also are those of the pronouncements at Moscow and Teheran.

The international system which they envisage will be based upon maintenance of the allied power which has enabled us to survive, since power is as vital for all good purposes in peace as in war. There is no practical alternative in the present state of the earth. Its first and essential principle being co-operation between the great World Powers, the system will be in effect a balance of power. If the World Powers work together, none seeking self-aggrandizement in any form which menaces the vital interests of other States, the system will work. If they fail to do so, it will infallibly lead to the formation of hostile camps.

But the fundamental co-operation required will not be incompatible with spheres of influence. Such spheres are in the nature of things and are not of necessity dangerous to peace. Influence, like power, is bad only if put to improper use; and experience proves that spheres of influence are stabilizing, when fairly employed.

The Monroe Doctrine, as I have already pointed out, established a sphere of influence, based upon naval power. It was good because its purpose was good, and because it contained no threat to the security or independence of other States. That is the essential point. The co-operation of World Powers and the balance of power it creates must ensure that all peace-abiding States have genuine independence and a voice in international councils proportionate to the responsibility they bear for international peace. If any great Power sets out to dominate its smaller neighbours, there will not be peace. If it refrains from domination, it gives to all its neighbourhood a security unobtainable by other means.

Finally, there must be understanding between the Colonial Powers, and more especially between those which possess the greatest military and economic strength, upon the principles which are to govern the relations of highly civilized peoples to backward ones. Controversy and disunion upon what is broadly called the Colonial question are very unfair to the less advanced

¹ Quoted from the verbatim report in *The Times*, April 10th, 1944.

peoples and bad for world prosperity, since they are bound to prevent that general rise in the standard of living which is equally essential for the welfare of the more and the less advanced. Having said my say upon what I regard as the right British attitude to this subject in a book published last year,¹ I will content myself here with a simple reiteration of my belief that international understanding upon the Colonial question is an essential element in any sound system of world organization for peace.

Everything in the last resort depends upon genuine co-operation amongst the World Powers. They must accept the necessity of a balance of power; and they must not use their power or influence to threaten each other's vital interests or to dominate the life and action of smaller nations in their respective spheres. Peace in this century must be peace between sovereign nations, since independent nationhood is an essential part of the freedom for which the peace-abiding nations have fought. Whatever system of international co-operation is established, the great World Powers must bear the main responsibility for its success. They must work together as sovereign Powers and respect the sovereignty of the weaker ones. There is no other road, in this century, to the two supreme desires of every civilized nation—national freedom and international peace.

It is within this broad conception of a world system of peace that I propose to discuss the special aims and needs of Britain, the European problem and the extra-European problems inseparable from it. I do not believe that a world association of nations can keep the peace unless its members are bound by definite obligations and alliances for definite purposes in their own quarter of the earth. But I am equally convinced that regional systems must be fitted into a world system governed by common aims, and that the three World Powers will fail disastrously if they do not bind themselves in honour to observe the principles of some world-embracing Covenant.

For Britain of all Powers to work against a World Code or Covenant would be to stultify her mission and dishonour her past. She has been striving for a long age to establish the Four Freedoms in a quarter of the earth. With almost every struggle for survival that she has weathered (and there have been

¹ *The British Commonwealth, Its Place in the Service of the World.* Walter Hutchinson. 1943.

many), her world responsibilities have increased. They are greater to-day than ever in the past, and the spirit in which she discharges them is set unchangeably by the character of the race. It is not a narrow or exclusive spirit, but broad, co-operative and tolerant. Had Britain ever deviated seriously or long from the policy of the good neighbour to all her neighbours in all parts of the globe, the power she wielded would have proved insupportable to others and she would have had no friends when struggling for her life.

For other Powers, as for her, the laws of sound navigation are fixed. No Power, however great, can ignore them without disastrous results. If those laws can be embodied in a Code or Covenant and accepted by all nations, the whole world will benefit. But they must be supported and enforced in every region by such Powers as can act in that region with effect. The Covenant should be universal, but the obligations it entails should be limited and precise, the force that guarantees it, region by region, being maintained by exact commitments within the means of those who subscribe to it.

The Covenant of the League of Nations was sound enough but for the fact that the obligations it entailed were out of keeping with the varying status of its members, slow moving in emergency, and extremely imprecise. It is now the task of the World Powers to establish a similar code which they themselves are prepared to honour and in which they can count upon the support of other independent nations, region by region, according to the measure of their strength. We have one law and one Scotland Yard in England; but we have also—I think wisely—an excellent County Police. A similar system is what the world requires for stable peace.

CHAPTER XII

BRITISH AIMS

The aims of British foreign policy are fixed by British opinion, and nothing is likely to alter them much. They can be summarized broadly as freedom, welfare and peace. By freedom we mean the right of Britain and every nation capable of the task

to shape its own society and govern itself as its people wish. By welfare we mean a world economy which gives to Britain and every nation the facilities required for finding sound employment for its people and raising their standard of life. By peace we mean not only the prevention of actual war, but the establishment of a general security against threats of war and competition in armaments.

In pursuing these aims Britain is bound, like every nation, to put her own vital interests and those of the Empire and Commonwealth first. But solicitude for herself and her own family is not, in her opinion, discordant with the vital interests of other peoples. I will try in this chapter to describe the general attitude of the British people towards the world of our time, to define their broader necessities, and to suggest the general line of policy by which they may best be met.

There are, broadly speaking, two methods by which the aims of foreign policy may be pursued. One is the method of setting them out in some general statement of principle such as the Atlantic Charter or the Fourteen Points, and calling on all nations equally to accept and honour them. The other is the method of fixing on the specific dangers or difficulties which beset your aims in the world as it is and striving to eliminate them by methods appropriate to each. The former of these methods is a political variant of Christian Science, which proclaims that there would be no sickness in the world if all men concentrated their thoughts upon the idea of health. The other, like medical science, accepts disease as an unfortunate fact and seeks to stem it at the source. In order, for instance, to protect humanity against bubonic plague it seeks to keep down rats.

I myself believe in both methods, provided we see clearly the strength and weakness in each. It is not without significance that British and American statesmen of the nineteenth century gave the world a ninety-nine-year period of general peace, while those of the twentieth have led their generation into two World Wars. So far as general principle is concerned, there was little difference between them. Canning and Monroe would certainly have accepted the three broad aims of freedom, welfare and peace. The world they dealt with was, it is true, less complex and less closely united than ours; but they might have involved their peoples in further widespread war, had they not

analysed its specific dangers and fixed the means of keeping them in check.

The fault of our twentieth-century statesmanship has not been lack of principle, but a tendency to believe that declarations of principle are sufficient in themselves to dispose of ugly facts. The dangers of war, like the dangers of disease, can be marked, and specific measures must be taken against them by those who have the strength. That, I have little doubt, is what the leaders of Russia think.

Britain is a World Power different in character from Russia and the United States. The territories of both those mighty Unions form for the most part a continuous land block. Russia has little but land frontiers to defend and contains within her own boundaries almost all that is required for a prosperous national life. She can feed her people, employ their brains and labour and raise their standard of living continuously without drawing largely on the resources of the outside world or seeking extensive markets in it. The American Union is less self-contained than Russia, and it is committed to the defence of territories divided by considerable distances of sea from the North American continent; but its external obligations are small by comparison with those of Britain and the British Commonwealth.

Being a European Power, Britain must have security in Europe if she is to continue to exist. But she has to draw the major part of her food and raw materials from the outside world, and to sell her manufactures in many outside markets, if her people are to be prosperous. She has also to protect a very extended Empire in all the other continents and to share in the defence of the other free nations which constitute the Commonwealth. She is therefore an Oceanic rather than a Continental Power.

"There is something common to all the Britons which even Acts of Union have not torn asunder. The nearest name for it is insecurity, something fitting in men walking on cliffs and the verge of things. . . . They are constantly colonists and emigrants; they have the name of being at home in every country. But they are in exile in their own country. They are torn between love of home and love of something else; of which the sea may be the explanation or may be only the symbol. It is also found in a nameless nursery rhyme which is the finest line in English literature, and the dumb refrain of all English poems—'Over the hills and far away.'"¹

¹ *A Short History of England*, by G. K. Chesterton, pp. 7-8.

That is a wonderful description of the pervading oceanic strain in British thought and life. We are islanders linked by tradition and necessity to all the oceans and continents. There is in Russia and the United States no comparable sense of kinship with the wide world or of dependence on it.

Britain and Russia

But our oceanic trend of mind and long tradition must accommodate themselves to new facts. They have hitherto made us isolationist towards Europe, so that we have as a rule intervened in its affairs only when our interest or security was threatened by some ambitious Power. That margin of security, with the semi-isolation it allowed, has now passed from us to the Western side of the Atlantic. The British Channel and the North Sea are no longer the bulwarks they used to be, though they still give us peculiar defensive strength. Britain is much closer to Europe than she used to be. So far as the English-speaking communities are concerned, it is the Atlantic, not the Channel, which is the important moat, Britain forming an advanced and vital outpost bastion upon the European side of it.

We must therefore not allow our oceanic and semi-detached tradition to blind us to the cardinal fact that the growing range of air power has made us more dependent than before upon the shape of events in the European cradle of our race. Though the sea is still our natural element, we shall have to play a more decisive and continuous part in preventing the domination of the European land-mass by any single Power. The only way of ensuring that is an equilibrium which guarantees the essentials of independence and security to all the nations of the European family.

We have been accustomed to throw our weight into the balance as soon as we realised that it was being dangerously disturbed. That *deus ex machina* role is no longer possible. There will be no equilibrium unless we ourselves take the lead in creating it and remain a constant part of it.

The creation of the equilibrium will not depend upon ourselves alone; it will depend upon our relations with Russia and also upon the line of policy which we and Russia adopt towards other European States. The main danger to us both will still be

Germany, deeply indoctrinated for three generations past with the belief that her greatness lies in war. Germany will cause another war if she cannot be enabled by some other means to find a peaceful way of life in consonance with her capacity and great natural strength. Seventy million Germans cannot be eliminated; they cannot even be changed in mind for a long period ahead; they must therefore be neutralised and rendered, if possible, content. The process will assuredly be slow, and it is bound to break down completely if Britain and Russia fall out. It is therefore not merely a British and a Russian interest, but a European and world interest, that the Anglo-Russian Alliance should be both firm and (no less important) acceptable to the weaker nations whom it directly affects.

Fortunately the common interests of Britain and Russia are in all essentials great. Russia wants peace. She has lost enormously in man power and material, from the very structure of cities, towns and villages to railways, roads and bridges, and every form of industrial or agricultural plant. In all these ways she needs a generation at least to recuperate, and there is reason to suppose that, despite the size of her population, man power will be her greatest lack. That is certainly one reason for the territorial ambitions upon her western frontiers which are causing so much disquiet. If Germany is allowed to scheme and organize for another war as she did from the very outset of the Twenty Years' Truce, Russia must of necessity come to terms with her and strive to turn her warlike ambitions west. But that is not in Russia's long-range interest, since Germany would have more to gain by conquest in the East when once she had disposed of danger from the West.

Russia, therefore, will not have security if she has to keep German militarism in check with her own unaided strength. She needs two other things. One is a firm alliance with the only Power commanding adequate military resources in the West; the other is contentment amongst the Central European States; and Britain holds the key to both.

If Britain failed to form and to maintain a balance in the West, the consequences would be calamitous. Russia would endeavour to secure her western frontiers by military domination over a widening range of neighbours; and those neighbours would infallibly begin to think that they needed Germany as a buttress against the encroachment of an eastern Power from

which they are more divided than from Germany by western culture and trend of thought.

This fatal renewal of the very conditions which precipitated the present war would restore to Germany the opportunity which the dominant military element in her people requires for its own use. And it is Britain only which can prevent it by forming a western equilibrium, by giving Russia real security in that sense, and by earning in that practical and honest guise the right (and the power) to insist that the European settlement shall guarantee a genuine independence to every historic nation.

A European Equilibrium

It will, I hope, be realized by the British people that the creation and maintenance of such an equilibrium in Europe is vital to their ideals and interests and also that it involves the acceptance of definite military obligations in co-operation with Russia and other European States. Neither Russia nor the weaker European nations will regard the creation of a world-wide League of Nations, with a universal but unspecific Covenant, as an effective substitute. The European problem, which is in effect the problem of Russia's and Germany's relations with each other and the rest of the European family, needs solution by Europe itself, though any European system which results must fit into a wider international system, if Britain is to form part of it with adequate influence and strength.

What Britain must do is to reintegrate the life of Europe on the lines of the British Commonwealth, which every European nation but Germany admires and would wish to imitate. This involves leadership combined with the acceptance of concrete military responsibilities in Europe, which Britain has always avoided in the past.

These must be harmonized with due attention to her extra European responsibilities and therefore fitted into a world-wide framework which provides for co-operation with the Dominions in their respective regions, with India and the Colonial Empire, and with the United States. But to suppose that universal guarantees obtained by membership in a universal system will suffice to cover Britain's special responsibilities in Europe or elsewhere would take all substance out of the Anglo-Russian Alliance and condemn us to impotence.

The Example of France

There is another consideration which we must not overlook. At the beginning of this study I dwelt upon the disastrous consequences of the fact that the peace settlement of 1919 placed too great a burden upon France. Partly through mistaken policy on our part and partly through her own fault, France was left to carry the main responsibility for freedom and security in Europe without any pledge of definite assistance from the Powers which, actually or potentially, were masters of military strength.

France sought to meet this burden by overtaxing the spirit of her people and by forming a network of alliances with the smaller States. She had little faith (and with some reason) in the universal and unspecific obligations accepted by members of the League of Nations, and she helped to make the League of no account by using its provisions when convenient to her own purpose and evading them when not. It is unjust that she should be blamed by friends whose record was equally inept; but France's fate contains a moral for us which it would be criminal to overlook.

It would be fatally easy for us at the present hour to drift into a position similar to that which ruined France. Leadership by Britain of a number of minor European States, combined with membership of some world-wide system of security which committed no Power or group of Powers to definite action against specific dangers to peace, can never be a substitute for clear and effective understanding with Russia, who is the essential eastern bastion of European peace.

Universalism offers not only to us but to Canada and the United States a most alluring alternative to the painful process of taking clear decisions, accepting definite engagements, maintaining the strength to honour them, and in general thinking our national policy out; and there are political reasons which every democratic leader will appreciate for making the maintenance of peace appear less burdensome than in fact it is to people who have sound ideas on social reform and do not like expenditure on defence.

But our leaders must not palter with our people. They must face and publicly insist upon the fact that Britain's security depends upon her acceptance of obligations in Europe which she has thought unnecessary in the past. They must demon-

strate that membership of some universal system of security will never be an effective substitute for definite commitments in support of European peace. They must not conceal the unwelcome truth that between the certain realism of Russia and the possible lack of realism in North America we have only one choice. They must think out and present our people with a European policy, balanced, practical and precise; and they must not pretend that we can follow it or enjoy security without cost. It is a case for leadership. We shall drift towards desperate insecurity like France, if we have no definite policy to ensure that Germany is henceforth surrounded by nations who can rely on us as we on them, East as well as West.

Mr. Walter Lippmann has put the case to his own leaders with such compelling force that I cannot do better than borrow his language and commend it to our leaders here in Britain, who in the past have often seemed to think that perorations can play the part of policy in making the world a safe and decent place:

"The example of Monroe, Jefferson and Madison teaches us that while a true policy will win the assent of the people, the policy will not be formulated if the responsible statesmen shirk the responsibility of making the initial decision. Monroe announced to Congress the policy which he and Madison and Jefferson had decided upon. He did what he conceived to be right and necessary. The correspondence of the three Virginian Presidents is concerned not with what the Gallup poll might show about the opinions of the people, but with what the vital interests of the country required in the situation as it presented itself. They did not ask whether the people, who were divided, could be induced to support a sound policy. They formulated a sound policy which the divided people came, because of its inherent virtue, to unite in supporting. This was that leadership by statesmen without which democracy is nothing but the vain attempt of men to lift themselves by their own bootstraps."¹

Fortunate indeed for that generation and for the three which followed it that there were leaders like Monroe or Jefferson in America and Canning in England to frame a policy, not on slogans, but on facts. They gave the civilized world a century free from other than local wars such as it had not known since the halcyon period of the Antonines. Our statesmen can do the same to-day, but they must give a lead to opinion and steer a definite course, not simply watch the wind and trim their sails to it.

¹ *United States Foreign Policy*, p. 51.

British Opinion

I am not thinking with disparagement of public opinion or responsible government when I emphasize the need of clear and courageous leadership. Our public opinion is sound and wise of heart. Responsible government through Parliament is the arch of law and freedom through which all policy must pass. But public opinion derives for the most part from men and women who do not know the world, though they know their own corner of it and in general what they want. They have ideals and consciences as well as interests; and they require of national policy two essential things—that it should give them what they ask and do what they think right.

What do they ask and what do they think right? In broad terms, freedom, welfare and peace—for themselves and for every one else. They want abundance and happiness in widest commonalty spread, and they will applaud any charter or proclamation which declares that the Grand Alliance of United Nations is marching on that path.

They also have some sentiments which are more definite. They want, for instance, to work with the sister British nations and to feel that the peoples of the Empire are one and all the better for being part of it. They have, on one side, a strong desire for fellowship with Russia; and, on the other, with the United States. They hate the idea of powerful nations dictating to the weak. They demand a code of decency and fair dealing in international affairs. They loathe the thought of war and everything connected with it; and they are only too willing to turn their backs on military service and discard all national armament, apart from a small professional Army and Air Force without adequate equipment and their beloved but stunted Fleet. They think all nations should work together for the common good, and they are easily deluded by the idea that an association of nations can atone by numbers and moral purpose for lack of definite obligation and individual strength.

All this is sound enough in spirit. As a nation, our hearts are in the right place. But the nation cannot know how best to get the kind of world it wants. That is the business of statesmen and leaders, who must have the courage to deal in realities and speak the truth. Charters and aspirations are not a policy; they are only the raw material of policy, and it is much easier

to frame them than to apply them effectively to recalcitrant and immensely varied facts.

An Education Bill is not education, nor ship's articles a ship. It is always easy to figure what you want ; the problem is how to get it within the means that you possess. That is where statesmanship counts. Hitch your waggon to a star, but make sure about the ropes.

After 1918 there was still a strong military Power of liberal traditions in Western Europe—France. We over-burdened her, urged her to rely on universal covenants, and thus helped to break her back. We can now help her to recover and also make sure that no disaster like hers lies waiting in the future for us—but only by taking her experience to heart.

Britain and the Commonwealth

There is, finally, an all-pervading purpose in British foreign policy which we can never lose to sight. Britain is not merely Britain ; she is the heart of a great Empire and Commonwealth. One of the cardinal merits of that system is the proof which it has given that sovereign nations can work together without sacrifice of freedom in a co-operative group. It raises the status of all its members, but has still a long way to go before the process is complete. Here again the aim is certain, but the process calls for continuous care and thought.

Sir Robert Borden, the great Canadian Prime Minister who steered the Dominion into and through the first World War, had an unrivalled insight into the life and needs of the Commonwealth. It was he who drafted with General Botha, then Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa, the resolution on foreign affairs passed unanimously by the Imperial Conference of 1917 which claimed "the right of the Dominions and India to an adequate voice in foreign policy and in foreign relations." The same resolution went on to demand "effective arrangements for continuous consultation in all important matters of common Imperial concern, and for such necessary concerted action, founded on consultation, as the several Governments may determine."

These principles were faithfully followed in the subsequent Peace Conference and also at the Washington Conference, which dealt principally with naval questions and relations toward Japan. But the interest of the Dominions in Europe faded

rapidly thereafter, as foreshadowed by Field Marshal Smuts' speech at the Imperial Conference of 1921.

Many years later, when he had retired from his high office, Sir Robert Borden came to Oxford and delivered a series of addresses on *Canada in the Commonwealth* at Rhodes House. He then quoted with warm approval some words addressed to him privately by General Botha in 1919 :

"I fought against the British, but I am a firm upholder of the Commonwealth. In South Africa we enjoy all the liberty that we could have as an independent nation, and far greater security against external aggression ; we have complete powers of self-government ; we control the development of our country ; and in the affairs of the world we take a place far higher and render a service more notable and useful than we could attain or give as a separate nation."¹

The same thing has been said again and again in public speech by another great Afrikaner, General Botha's successor in the premiership, Field Marshal Smuts. In neither case is the conviction due to British sentiment. It is the fruit of experience.

In Britain the war has greatly enhanced the nation's determination to play its major share in keeping the Empire and the Commonwealth intact. Britain can maintain and even increase the power for which that mission calls—but on one condition only, that she is herself secure in her own continent ; and she must look to the Dominions for understanding of that fundamental point. Her life is theirs, and theirs is hers, since the whole is the sum of all its parts ; and Europe, which has twice threatened that common life, will still be the quarter whence danger is most likely to arise.

It is therefore essential to the Commonwealth that Britain's policy in Europe should be strengthened by the widest possible Commonwealth assent. The more secure that Britain is in Europe, the greater her power to share the burden of security in other continents. Sir Robert Borden, who came to know Europe as well as his own continent in the first World War and in the earlier years of the Twenty Years' Truce, was at pains for that very reason to emphasize the Commonwealth aspect of British European policy in the last of his 1929 addresses at Oxford. This is what he said :

¹ *Canada in the Commonwealth*, 1929, p. 105.

"Commitments purporting to involve Great Britain alone, such as those imposed by the Anglo-American Guarantee Treaty of Paris and by the Locarno Treaty, are directly concerned with the ultimate issue of war in which the Dominions would be involved and, however essential for preserving the peace of Europe, they can hardly conduce to the unity of the Commonwealth. Great Britain has become part of the European mainland. The Dominions will never have a European outlook. But we beyond the seas must remember that each nation stands at the threshold of every other, that all frontiers touch one another throughout the world, that there can be no hermit nation and no hermit continent."¹

Britain cannot alter her geographical position, and she will have to make the commitments in Europe which her security necessitates. But Commonwealth agreement on them is one of the fundamental points which she must keep at heart.

The aims of the British Empire and Commonwealth are not in dispute. They are, in broad terms, the following :—

(1) To protect the freedom and increase the status of the sovereign nations which are members of it.

(2) To promote the economic welfare of those communities as a whole and to raise their standard of life.

(3) To give security to its dependent territories, to promote the economic welfare of their peoples, and to train them up towards responsible government.

(4) Not to use its power and wealth in such a way as to prejudice the welfare of other peoples, but rather to enlarge their economic opportunities, and to secure them access on equitable terms to the raw materials and markets indispensable to their economic life.

(5) To live as a good neighbour with all peoples, and to promote the rule of law in international affairs.²

British opinion is united throughout the world on those broad aims; but Britain carries the chief responsibility for framing a policy which combines her own welfare and security with the sentiment, welfare and security of the Empire and Commonwealth in all its immensely varied parts, because she is its strongest member and also the most critically placed.

The Meeting of Prime Ministers

A meeting of the King's Prime Ministers was held in London in May with Mr. Churchill as chairman. This was not a formal Imperial Conference, but a gathering of His Majesty's chief

¹ *Canada in the Commonwealth*, p. 128.

² *The British Commonwealth*, p. 26.

advisers to discuss the war and the more immediate problems arising out of it. It showed that the whole resources of the Empire and Commonwealth will be thrown into the war, not only against Germany, but also against Japan. The Prime Ministers declared in a final statement that they were united in their resolve "to hold back nothing to reach the goal and bring to the speediest end the agony of mankind."

The varied character of the Empire and Commonwealth was vividly typified by the representatives who took part in the gathering, and all alike proclaimed their gratitude for Mr. Churchill's inspired leadership against the fiercest challenge which the British system has ever had to surmount. Mr. Mackenzie King, the Prime Minister of Canada, is a College-trained boy, partly educated in the United States. He leads a Liberal Government. He has French-Canadian as well as British ancestors. Field Marshal Smuts, who has borne a world-wide reputation for thirty years, was leader in early manhood of one of the greatest feats of irregular horse in the history of war. That was when he was fighting for the South African Republics against the Empire in the South African War more than fifty years ago. He is not only a statesman of great weight, but a scholar, philosopher, and scientist who has made his own original contributions to modern thought. He is of Dutch and Huguenot descent. His Government is a National one, including both British and Dutch.

Mr. Curtin, the Prime Minister of Australia, is the son of a police officer of Irish descent. He was born in Australia, and showed ability from early manhood as a member of the trade union movement and also as a journalist. He has been in the Australian Parliament since 1928, became leader of the Labour Party in 1935, and Prime Minister in 1941. Mr. Fraser, the Prime Minister of New Zealand, was born in Scotland and educated at a village school there. He emigrated to New Zealand at the age of 26, and earned his living for some years as a labourer and water-side worker. Only eight years later he became President of the Auckland General Labourers' Union and was elected to the New Zealand Parliament. He became Prime Minister in 1940 and identified himself at once with the broadcast pledge given at the outbreak of war by his predecessor, Mr. Savage, to the people of New Zealand: "Both with gratitude for the past and with confidence for the future, we range ourselves without fear beside Great Britain. Where she goes, we go ;

where she stands, we stand." Mr. Fraser and Mr. Curtin are the heads, not of Coalition, but of Labour Governments.

India was represented at the discussions by the two Indian members of the British War Cabinet, the Maharaja of Kashmir, who has been Ruler of his State since 1925, and Sir Ferozkhan Noon, a distinguished member of the Indian Bar who has served and held high office in Indian public life since 1921. The Maharaja is a Brahmin and one of the greatest Hindu Princes. Sir Ferozkhan Noon is a Moslem. Southern Rhodesia was represented by its Prime Minister, Sir Godfrey Huggins, who was born in Kent and trained for the medical profession in London. He migrated to Rhodesia in 1921, and, after ten years' apprenticeship in its Legislative Assembly, has been Prime Minister since 1933. His hold on the affections of the Colony is deep and strong.

The gathering was therefore catholic in character and representative of many different points of view.

The declaration issued by the Prime Ministers at its conclusion was necessarily general in its terms. More precision is to be given to it at a later meeting when operations are further advanced. But it made two important pronouncements which bear directly on the subject of this book. After the passage already quoted on united prosecution of the war against Germany and Japan, the Prime Ministers said: "We have also examined together the principles which determine our foreign policies, and their application to current problems. Here, too, we are in complete agreement." It was, they added, their common aim that, "when the storms and passions of war have passed away, all countries now overrun by the enemy shall be free to decide for themselves their future form of democratic government."

I cannot refrain from quoting the concluding paragraph of their declaration in full:

"In a world torn by strife we have met here in unity. That unity finds its strength, not in any formal bond, but in the hidden springs from which human action flows. We rejoice in our heritage of loyalties and ideals, and proclaim our sense of kinship to one another. Our system of free association has enabled us, each and all, to claim a full share of the common burden. Although spread across the globe, we have stood together through the stresses of two World Wars, and have been welded the stronger thereby. We believe that when victory is won and peace returned, this same free association, this inherent unity of purpose, will make us able to do further service to mankind."

No one who was in touch with the Prime Ministers during the conference will question the intense sincerity of those words.

I was not amongst those privileged to be present at their official gatherings, but I have known more than one of them for a long while. The proceedings under Mr. Churchill's chairmanship must at times have been deeply moving. That impression is inefaceable, even at second hand.

CHAPTER XIII

THE CONCERT OF EUROPE.—I

Let us therefore be precise. What do we mean by the Concert of Europe? Why is it necessary? How is it to be organized? And what commitments will it involve?

The Concert of Europe, often alluded to as such before 1914 and often most effective in settling controversies that threatened peace, was a diplomatic system under which the chief European Powers conferred together in their common interests. It was not a rigid system, nor had it any covenants which bound all Powers alike. It met as circumstances required, and the Powers which constituted it kept their sovereignties intact. Alliances were formed within it which changed from time to time. It failed to prevent war between European Powers such as the Crimean War in 1854 and the war in 1870-71 between Germany and France; but while Bismarck governed German policy, it localized the controversies and prevented the formation of permanently hostile camps between groups of nations.

The change came with the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries when Germany, already predominant on land, set out to challenge the naval security of Britain by building the German High Seas Fleet. The Concert then by a gradual process collapsed, for two reasons. It could not prevent a rivalry in armaments which threatened the very existence of France and Britain; and it gave no adequate representation in its councils to the weaker European States. These accordingly became the subject of constant trouble between the greater Powers and occasioned, if they did not cause, the outbreak of the first World War in 1914, as also that of the second in 1939.

The moral is clear. If the Concert is to be re-established with greater success, it must provide for the representation of the

weaker States in some form which gives them greater influence and strength. This, no doubt, is the reason why Mr. Churchill in his broadcast of 21st March, 1943, spoke of organization by groups. It must also be of such a character that the stronger Powers do not relapse into organized rivalry.

Why is a Concert of Europe Necessary?

If another world war breaks out in the next twenty or thirty years, Europe will be the cause of it. War on that scale can only be made by Powers which are in themselves great arsenals, commanding or possessing the necessary resources in man power, raw material, industry and strategic bases. For a long time to come there will be but three such Powers—the American Union, the Soviet Union, and the British Commonwealth. China is not yet such a Power; and her future may conceivably lead to friction between the three great arsenal Powers when Germany and Japan are defeated. "We cannot know now," says Mr. Lippmann, "what a great Chinese power portends, and we cannot afford to freeze our ideas about a situation which will gradually unfold itself."¹ Suffice it to say that the relations of the three great arsenal Powers with regard to Europe will be the main determinant of their relations in other continents. Europe constitutes the primary danger of war and must be dealt with first.

I do not see how another World War can be prevented if Britain seeks to live in isolation from Europe, or even if she fails to abandon semi-isolation, attempting to shape affairs in Europe without accepting any concrete responsibility for the defence of peace. To be secure she must, I believe, regard herself henceforth as part of the European continent and assume the role of leader in its western half, for which no other Western European nation now has the strength. If she wants peace, she has no other choice.

With Britain isolated, there can be no strength on Germany's western frontiers to complement Russia's in the East. Events in that case would be bound to take either one or other of two possible shapes, since it is the policy of great Powers which will determine their course. Either Russia also would isolate herself, strengthening her defences by all possible means on her north-western, western and south-western marches and leaving Germany

¹ *United States Foreign Policy*, p. 97.

free to remarshal her ambitions and dominate the West. Or else Russia would aim at European ascendancy for herself and keep down Germany by extending her control over the whole continent. In either event Britain would find herself menaced by a continental Power possessed of overshadowing bases and superior resources.

The Anglo-Russian Alliance is valid for twenty years. The question is what it will be worth when twenty years have passed. It is, I believe, the one hope of stability for an even longer period, if Britain's European policy is such as to make for Russian security against Germany by building up the nations of the West. But if Britain flags or fails in that mission, it will inevitably collapse. No one can tell what course Russia might then choose; but my own impression is that her people will not develop the German mania for conquest and ascendancy, provided that their own new life is safe. The passion for *Weltmacht oder Niedergang* is, I hope and believe, a German monopoly.

Certainly, the Russian people have no natural liking for war, though they fight magnificently when compelled to it. They are much more interested in their own land and life than in other peoples', and it is large enough. Though greatly curious about the rest of Europe, they regard themselves (quite rightly) as in many ways distinct from it, and I have heard some modern Soviet poetry which expresses a 'genial contempt for the West. Russia is returning to her ancient national traditions, as witness the attitude of the Orthodox Church towards the Vatican and its close association with the new Russian system of government. Her people are set on making a great thing of their country for their own pride and benefit. They will exercise an increasing influence upon their Government, and they will not by nature be concerned with life outside their own vast national estate. They have everything they need within it; space, food and employment for any conceivable increase in their numbers, and no temptation whatever to look for conquest or aggrandizement beyond it.

Russian Governments are therefore likely to concentrate, so far as foreign policy is concerned, on security for that estate. The only great potential arsenals of war which can imperil it are Germany and China. Russia will need capital goods from Britain and the United States, and (apart from differences which may be caused by the German or the Chinese question) she can rest assured that their vital interests march with hers. Sub-

sidiary but most important questions, bearing on the greater ones, are her maritime outlets and her policy towards her weaker neighbours. The Chinese question is also open, but light will be thrown upon it by Russia's attitude towards the Pacific war when her forces are freed in the West.

My broad conclusion is that Russia's main preoccupation will be security, plant and labour for internal development. She can have them all by alliance with us, if we give her full co-operation and mount guard upon Germany's western flanks. In a régime that suits Russia's major needs, the smaller States of Europe may reasonably hope for freedom and peace. But they will have no such hope if German militarism is not held in check from West as well as East. The future of Germany is therefore the main issue.

This conclusion is, I think, reinforced by a factor of which no Westerner can estimate the weight. The Russians are a mystical people, and the Soviet Revolution gave birth to a sense of mission in them which is certainly still a force. Old and new are now blending to create a national and ideological patriotism of even greater strength. The reverence for the Tsars was fused in former times with spiritual devotion to the Orthodox Faith. The Tsardom and the Hierarchy have disappeared completely in their ancient guise, but there is still an autocracy in Russia, closely allied to a transformed but still potent Church; and it might fire the Russian people with a crusading fervour, as the spirit of revolution once fired the conquering armies of France. The Red Star might shine upon the brow of a Napoleon, should the times appear to call for leadership of that stamp.

This is unlikely to happen if Russian security and welfare are assured, because Russia will not be driven to conquest by poverty or bankruptcy, like revolutionary France. But Russia will not be tender towards neighbours or allies whom she feels unable to trust. I repeat, therefore, that our attitude to Germany will be the main issue.

The German Question

Russia can have no anxiety about our attitude towards Germany to-day, though doubts have been expressed from time to time (most probably for diplomatic reasons) in the Soviet Press. What she is entitled to doubt, when looking to the past, is our attitude over the next twenty or thirty years. If we ever

hope again to make terms with German militarism, if we put our faith once more in conciliation and concession to Germany without regard to our military strength, if we return to the hallucination that friendship with Germany can be a substitute for close alliance with Western Europe, and more particularly with the Low Countries and France, then indeed we shall lose the Russian Alliance and sacrifice another victory to sloth and incompetence.

There is a Foreign Office memorandum on this subject which has passed into history but which remains as true to-day as forty years ago, when it was written. Its cogency impressed Lord Grey, then Foreign Secretary, so much that although its author, Mr. (later Sir Eyre) Crowe was not yet one of his principal advisers, he circulated it to the Prime Minister and other members of the Cabinet. It reviewed the relations of Britain, Germany and France from the early 'eighties, and reached by instance after instance the conclusion that, in dealing with Germany, the method of "appeasement" was hopelessly and dangerously unremunerative :

"There is one road which, if past experience is any guide to the future, will most certainly not lead to any permanent improvements of relations with any Power, least of all Germany, and which must therefore be abandoned ; that is the road paved with graceful British concessions—concessions made without any conviction either of their justice or of their being set off by equivalent counter-services. The vain hopes that in this manner Germany can be 'conciliated' and made more friendly must be definitely given up. It may be that such hopes are still honestly cherished by irresponsible people, ignorant, perhaps necessarily ignorant, of the history of Anglo-German relations during the last twenty years, which cannot be better described than as the history of a systematic policy of gratuitous concessions, a policy which has led to the highly disappointing result disclosed by the almost perpetual state of tension existing between the two countries. Men in responsible positions, whose business it is to inform themselves and to see things as they really are, cannot conscientiously retain any illusions on this subject."

Years later, when the first World War had come and gone, Lord Grey reflected on the course which Germany might have taken had Bismarck still had charge of her affairs at the turn of the century. In his memoirs, published in 1925, he puts a speech on Bismarck's lips, showing how the latter would have misled Britain by friendliness and achieved ascendancy over her by keeping her detached from Russia and France. I must quote the conclusion of this imaginary address (it pictures Bismarck speaking) :

"Then, if I thought the time had come for war, I should have remembered how, in 1870, the British Government required me, as a condition of neutrality, to sign an agreement to respect Belgium, and what English statesmen said about it at the time. I should have made sure whether English feeling was still the same, and have told the General Staff that they must have a plan that did not involve Belgium, or else they must have no war. With England neutral, I should have been sure of Italy; with France and Russia unable to maintain supplies of munitions, or even to purchase them from abroad, the war would not have been long and victory would have been certain. Then easy terms for France and Russia, as for Austria in 1866, and Germany would have been supreme on the Continent. *England would, meanwhile, by the development of modern weapons and aircraft, have lost much of the safety she once had as an island; she would have had no friend but Germany, and Germany could have made that friendship what she pleased.*"¹

Lord Grey's own final comment upon the subject, shows how well he understood the weakness of this country in such matters :

"Had such a policy been pursued by Germany, I think it not only possible, but almost certain, that British Ministers and British opinion would have reacted to it as described. *The result would have been German preponderance and British dependence, but this would not have been foreseen in London till too late.*"²

It has proved most true that the futility of appeasement towards Germany would not be realized in London till too late; we have escaped the consequence by miracle. But even now, after all that has passed, we have voices reintoning the old chant, that Germany will prove a better friend for Britain than Communistic Russia and a France which can no longer be relied upon.

It is imperative that sane British men and women should stop their ears with resolution against these incantations. There is only one sound way of estimating how a foreign nation will behave, and that is to consult the facts of history and the lessons of experience. We know that after centuries of mutual hostility France and Britain were brought together by the emergence of a common mortal danger—united and militarist Germany. We know that if France had not given the life of over two million of her sons—that is, double our own sacrifice—in the first World War, Britain could not then have survived the German challenge. We know that if France had not fallen in 1940 (a collapse for which we cannot evade some measure of responsibility), this

¹ *Twenty-Five Years*, Vol. I, pp. 243-5. My italics.

² *Ibid.*, p. 245. My italics.

second World War would not have brought us to the brink of utter destruction or cost what it will to the British and American peoples. We know that, having lost all foothold in northern Europe because Germany had conquered France and the Low Countries, we have had to strain our man and woman power almost beyond endurance and mortgage every asset we possess in order to retake the European bastion which is as necessary as the Channel itself to our insular security.

We know that we tried the course of friendship and concession towards Germany with untiring persistence before and after her union in the nineteenth century until the verge of war in 1914. We know that we resumed it with equal hope between the last war and this. We know that all these efforts failed because the modern German Reich was welded by war against its neighbours and steadily, remorselessly indoctrinated with the view that Germany must become the overlord of Europe in order to fulfil her destiny. We know that this reactionary faith combined with love of war as the highest activity of man has been drilled and hammered into the great majority of living Germans, and that there can be no genuine change of heart in Germany until the strength and organization of the countries about her over a long period of years has proved that her dreams of domination are hopeless. Only then, and not before, shall we be entitled to hope that she will live and prosper in peaceful co-operation with the rest of the European family.

We know finally that the victory on which this prospect depends would not have been possible without the help of great Allies who share our need of safety against Germany. All this knowledge has cost enough to be worth remembering. The problem of world peace in this century is the European problem, and the essence of the European problem is that of Germany. We have to create a Concert of Powers possessed of the strength and animated with the resolve to exorcise the German war neurosis for ever. I believe it can be done provided the Concert is fair to all and holds to its central purpose unwaveringly.

CHAPTER XIV

THE CONCERT OF EUROPE.—II

I come then to the question how such a system of security can best be organized and what commitments it will involve.

Manifestly the European system must be part of a wider system. Britain is not a purely European Power, nor is Russia, nor is France, nor is Holland, nor any other European country with Colonial responsibilities. One of the essential purposes of this country should be so to strengthen its European position that it may have power to spare for its other vast responsibilities. The Atlantic, the Mediterranean, the Indian Ocean, the Pacific, the South Seas are all of grave importance to it, for it is no mere island but the heart of an oceanic Commonwealth. But it will avail nothing outside Europe unless it is safe as an island against a concentration of force in the west or centre of its own continent.

For that a world system which did not allow of specific regional arrangements such as a Concert of Europe would be totally inadequate. We have had our experience. People say that if the League had been properly backed, it would have served its beneficent purpose. Why was it not backed? Partly, no doubt, because its main supporters made a fetish of disarming each other and thus rendered themselves impotent against Japan, Italy and Germany. But that was not the only reason. The League's commitments were also too wide and too general, and it was that feature which really alienated the most far-seeing American Senators.

In his famous speech of December 21st, 1918, Senator Lodge, for instance, declared himself inexorably opposed to universal obligations, but ready to consider precisely defined and limited commitments. I was in Washington in 1919, and I gathered the impression from prominent Republicans (Senator Root amongst them) that the Senate might even then have ratified the Treaty of Versailles with the joint Anglo-American guarantee to France, if President Wilson had been willing to accept an amendment reserving the moral freedom of the United States as regards the undefined and universal obligations implicit in the Covenant.

I do not know how Republican or Democratic opinion is now shaping upon this all-important issue; but Americans will assuredly want to know exactly where they stand in the matter of Atlantic and Pacific security. The British Dominions likewise will, if they are wise, demand arrangements on which they can rely for their own regional security. In Europe the need of all peace-loving nations will be the same; they will require precise insurance for their own countries.

It is generally forgotten nowadays that the first country to repudiate the peace settlement of 1919 was not Japan but Turkey. Britain was alone in seeking to preserve it. When the challenge was given at Chanak in 1922, France, dissatisfied with Versailles and all its works, was pursuing her own policies. The Dominions were not interested. Nations, in fact, must know more clearly where they stand than is ever possible under worldwide covenants. Their obligations must be such as they can honourably promise to discharge, and must therefore be in strict keeping with their power, the popular sentiment and vital interests. There is only one way to secure that essential condition, namely, regional associations of a precise and practical character within the framework of a larger order.

Mr. Churchill has recently reaffirmed his belief in a world order thus articulated by special regional arrangements. When winding up the two-days debate in the House of Commons on Empire and Commonwealth unity, he put it clearly, thus :—

“We have often said of our own British Empire, ‘In my Father’s house are many mansions.’ So in this far greater world structure, which we shall surely raise out of the ruins of desolating war, there will be room for all generous, free associations of a special character, so long as they are not disloyal to the world cause nor seek to bar the forward march of mankind.”¹

That is the case for a Concert of Europe, most likely containing special insurance groups within it and consistent as a whole with a larger world structure. Failing such a Concert, Europe will not arise with any hope of permanent safety from the savage confusion wrought by Germany.

The European Mansion

The European nations fall into certain natural groups by virtue of their geographical position, their history, their interests and individual characters. No artificial grouping could or need be imposed. It will come from free association provided the great

¹ *Official Report*, April 21st, 1944, column 586–7.

Powers agree with each other in furthering it. If they disagree, the small countries will be distracted by the differences of the great, and war will once again be the consequence.

Russia will be a colossus in the East of Europe, and she will have a sphere of influence on her north-western, western and south-western marches. Britain will be the bastion of the West, supported, I hope, by the British Commonwealth, the United States and the Atlantic Community, to which I shall come in the next chapter. Her vital interests are closely related to those of France, Holland, Belgium and Italy, as also to those of Portugal, her oldest ally. Spain with her Atlantic, Mediterranean and North African interests belongs naturally to the same group, though her terrible internal dissensions have made her slow to realize it.

There can be no security for Britain in this air age unless she forms a military alliance with France, the Netherlands, Belgium and Italy providing for the maintenance of the forces required over a long period of years to prevent a revival of militarism in Germany. This is the essential complement or balance to the Russian guard in the East, and I may as well quote what I have already said in the House of Commons about it :—

“The moral of Pearl Harbour has not quite gone home in this country yet. If any Power were to acquire domination of the European continent and this country were friendless and unarmed, nothing in the world would prevent this Island from being ‘Pearl Harboured’ in a night. This is a new age towards which we are moving and we have to face up to it and not consider a vague organization which will get together for discussions and say, ‘If certain things prove to be so we will take action in due course.’ We have to consider some organization which will act promptly enough to prevent us from being ‘Pearl Harboured’ in a night. That is the issue and do not let us get away from it. . . .

“It is quite clear that in this matter distant countries cannot help very much. What matters are the countries which are here on the spot. We must reckon with that. The first thing is an alliance with Russia. I hope Honourable Members in this House will realise that it is not what the alliance with Russia is to-day, but what it is twenty years hence that will matter. That is the critical moment that will come. That is the fundamental issue. The second thing I think everybody will agree about, and which will be very much in the mind of Russia, is what we can do in the West to constitute a guard against Germany which is equal to the Russian guard in the East. They will say, ‘How secure is it, how promptly can it act, what force does it command, is it something on which we can rely?’ If there is to be a reliable guard in the West, we have to make definite and precise military commitments. Next, in regard to Europe is this: We have to provide for a Concert of Europe in which the smaller States are adequately represented so that they may be independent and keep their self-respect. I am sure everybody will agree with that.”

I see no escape from this. It is for Britain a life and death necessity, and equally so for the Low Countries, France and Italy. Its central purpose would be firm and farsighted co-operation in measures to preclude all possibility of air armament in Germany. If competition of that kind begins again, it will end in catastrophe. The actual measures required are for the experts to determine; they will assuredly demand the upkeep of land as well as air forces to which the partners in the alliance all contribute their quota, and arrangements for the stationing of troops and air squadrons on the basis that, for military purposes, the Allies will regard their countries as common territory and provide each other with all appropriate facilities. The part of foreign policy is to see that the terms of the alliance fall short in no way of what the professionals regard as essential.

If Portugal and Spain were prepared to join it, this alliance would bring together all the Western nations from whom, since Roman times, the force called Western civilization has drawn its inspiration and overspread the globe. All but Italy and Belgium have been its standard-bearers for centuries in the Eastern and Western hemispheres; all but Italy will still be Colonial Powers; all without exception have vital common interests to serve. The Alliance should not be exclusive in any way; it has everything to gain by close collaboration with the other branch of the Atlantic Community which inhabits the Americas. Power has shifted greatly from the eastern to the western side of the Atlantic in the last hundred years, and that great ocean is now almost an inland sea uniting a company of peoples who must work together if western civilization as we understand it is to survive. But it is in Europe itself that organization by alliance is most imperatively required.

The European mansion does not consist only of Russia, its great eastern bastion, and the Western European Powers. Between the two lie three groups of nations whose independence and welfare are indispensable to those of the European family. (I treat Germany as a self-made outlaw whose welfare is important to all, but whose war mania will have to be kept in check by determined neighbours until a new and saner generation has matured.) Apart from Germany there is the Scandinavian group, to which in some ways Finland also belongs; there is the central group consisting of Poland and the Danubian States; and there is the Balkan community consisting of Turkey, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Greece.

Finland, Norway, Sweden and Denmark have close affinities with the Western nations, but they must also work in accord with Russia, if their independence is to be assured. They are at present deeply divided. Norway and Denmark have been over-run by Germany and are filled with hatred for the German race. Sweden is neutral, and has always leant towards Germany rather than Russia since the former took station as the stronger Baltic Power. Finland is at war with Russia and has rejected what Sweden, a closely interested neighbour, regarded as reasonable Russian terms. Russia will henceforth dominate the Baltic, and will need to feel assured that her exit to the North Sea is in friendly hands. Norway and Denmark would gain by joining the Western alliance if they could do so with Russia's goodwill, and all four nations must be concerned in wishing that the alliance between Britain and Russia remains firm. Their peace depends upon the recreation of a Concert of Europe in which Britain and Russia agree upon the independence and status of the weaker European States.

The central European group, which consists of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Hungary and Rumania, is doomed to a precarious existence if its members cannot act together, particularly in the economic field. Russia seems to be opposed to a Danubian confederation; but the dismemberment of the Dual Monarchy was not an unmixed blessing to the Succession States, and its glaring crudities ought in some way to be redressed. The members of the group all have affinities, like Poland, with Western Europe; but they occupy a sphere of vital importance to Russia and can never be sure of peace or independence without her friendship and support. Russia must be satisfied that they will not co-operate against her or contribute in any way to a revival of militarism in Germany. Given that assurance, she will have no reason to concern herself with their internal affairs.

One of the worst features of the last peace settlement was its failure to establish some free co-operative system in the Danube basin in place of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The old saying that if that Empire did not exist, it would have to be invented, has lost none of its truth. Russia has laid a ban upon the creation of anything resembling a *cordon sanitaire* against her, and she has good reason to proclaim a Monroe doctrine of her own in the Central European area. But a doctrine of that character may be as stabilizing an influence in Central Europe as

in the Western Hemisphere provided that it is not a disguise for economic or political ascendancy. If the weaker countries are to be truly free, they cannot be forbidden to form associations of a peaceful character with each other ; and British policy should espouse their freedom with all the influence it can exert.

The Balkan group—Turkey, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Greece—will have equal need of good relations with Russia, since the latter will henceforth be a Mediterranean as well as a Black Sea Power. What readjustment of existing treaties free passage to the Mediterranean for Russia will necessitate no one can yet tell, but Britain will assuredly not resume her nineteenth century opposition, if Russia demands the freedom of the Dardanelles. Britain's profound and undiminished interest in the freedom of the Mediterranean is only one more reason why a firm alliance between her and Russia is essential to European peace. If the United States develops interests in the Eastern Mediterranean because of her need of oil, she also will be a Mediterranean Power, and will have the same concern as the British Commonwealth in Mediterranean affairs.

Turkey has not played a distinguished part in this war, and she will have to make what terms with Russia she can. The Bulgarians are a Slav people, and their popular sentiment is certain to be pro-Russian when they are freed from German control. Yugoslavia, which is at present in the melting-pot, should have restitution from Bulgaria, and so should Greece. To both those peoples Britain owes a debt which she should do her utmost to repay. Here again the surest means is a group association which can count upon British and Russian friendship and goodwill.

British European Policy Summarized

The interests of Britain in Europe can now be summarized. Her first and foremost interest is what it has always been, namely, to prevent the domination of Western Europe by any great military Power—an interest immensely enhanced by the new danger from the air. For a generation at least to come the risk of another attempt at domination will reside in Germany. If Germany is once more allowed to rearm, British security will be gone.

To neutralize that danger, three things are required :—

1. An alliance between Britain and Russia based upon the fact that they have no divergent interests and a master common interest in keeping Germany disarmed.
2. An alliance between Britain and Germany's Western neighbours which will guarantee that the Western guard upon Germany is firm.
3. The establishment upon those two essential foundations of an European Concert which ensures independence, economic freedom and a voice in its councils to all European nations, including Germany (provided she loyally accepts disarmament).

The first of these essentials has already been secured. Britain has a twenty-years alliance with Russia and must see that twenty years hence it will have proved its value to both signatories, so that the pillars of the new European order may not be undermined. The second has not yet won official acceptance, so far as public declarations are concerned. Its virtue will depend upon the other nations of the British Commonwealth, the United States and France, and I will endeavour to show in later chapters that the British Atlantic and Pacific communities cannot be indifferent to it. The third cannot be realized so long as Europe remains divided by small and unco-operative sovereignties as the last peace settlement prescribed. The smaller nations must be free to group themselves in political and economic combinations, if their freedom is to be real ; and they should be represented by groups in the Concert of Europe, if their voices are not to be too small.

It should be emphasized at this point that Britain's hands are not tied to-day by secret engagements of any kind. Mr. Eden, who stands next to Mr. Churchill in the confidence of the nation and in many ways resembles his great predecessor at the Foreign Office, Lord Grey, has given that assurance to Parliament more than once, and he repeated it to the May meeting of Commonwealth Prime Ministers. He said, for instance, in the House of Commons on December 15th, 1943 :—

"I can give this undertaking—that as long as I have anything to do with the conduct of the Foreign Office, if I make an engagement, I shall come and tell the House at once. That is the constitutional practice ; and if they do not like it, they can turn me out."

The peace-making in 1919 was seriously handicapped by more than one secret engagement, contracted in the stress of war. It is fatally easy for Governments, as for individuals, to make rash promises in moments of difficulty which seem innocuous at the time but become boomerangs later on; and nothing is more likely to disturb confidence between Allies. Even Lord Grey made one or two such mistakes. The fact that the British Government has kept entirely free from them in even harder circumstances in this war is therefore in welcome contrast to the older practice, which will assuredly never be revived.

Britain has free hands; and no nation's independence is compromised or endangered in any way by her actions in this war. The independence of nations has long been one of her guiding principles, and must continue to be so. To it is due the natural strength of the British Commonwealth and the fact that British naval and economic predominance was never regarded as a threat, but rather as a safeguard, by the weaker Powers. In the Foreign Office memorandum which I quoted in my last chapter, Sir Eyre Crowe pointed out that our worldwide authority was never challenged because it was "so directed as to harmonize with the general desires and ideals common to all mankind."

"The first interest of all countries" (he continued) "is the preservation of national independence. It follows that England, more than any other non-insular Power, has a direct and positive interest in the maintenance of the independence of nations and therefore must be the natural enemy of any country threatening the independence of others, and the natural protector of the weaker communities."

That principle of British foreign policy is not less vital to-day because it is now more difficult to pursue. Recent history has shown that the independence and prosperity of small States may depend very much on their right (and willingness) to combine with other neighbouring small States for common political and economic ends. The stability of peace in Europe is going to turn in the future, as it has in the past, upon the policy of the great Powers towards the weaker in the Central European zone from Scandinavia to the Mediterranean.

Russian policy upon the right of combination is by no means clear, because it seems to assume that combination must take the unfriendly guise of *cordons sanitaires*. American policy is equally equivocal upon the economic side, because it seems to be set against reciprocal arrangements between sovereign States

whatever their geographical or other ties. Britain must, it seems to me, strive to secure the right of combination for the weaker States in suitable political and economic groups, if the fragmentation or Balkanisation which has wrought such grievous harm on Europe is ever to be overcome. Mr. Churchill has twice expressed his sympathy with that view, which can, however, never prevail so long as Russia bans it for political reasons in her own sphere of influence and America discourages it for economic reasons everywhere. If all three great Powers could agree upon the conditions in which they were prepared to further it, the prospects of contentment in Europe would be much advanced.

It is also most important that the Western European Alliance, with Britain as its nucleus, should have the support of the British Dominions and, if that may be, of the United States. Britain herself must conclude it at all costs if she is to survive. She cannot risk the resurgence of any Power in Europe which might "Pearl Harbour" her by using bombers with fighter protection in overwhelming strength. We have an inveterate tendency to assume that when once that danger has been averted, it will never recur. It will, however, remain a mortal danger, as Lord Grey said, and the future of the whole Atlantic Community is involved in it.

CHAPTER XV

THE ATLANTIC COMMUNITY

The title of this chapter is taken, with cordial acknowledgment, from Mr. Walter Lippmann's illuminating study of American foreign policy, to which I have already frequently referred. He deals with the subject from the American standpoint. I propose to deal with it from the British one. My conclusions will coincide with his; but I should make it clear that I do not presume to offer advice to the American people on the policy they should pursue. That is their affair, though the British Commonwealth and the world will be greatly affected by it. My point is that British policy, to be sound, must be governed by the same facts which nobody can alter, and by hard-bought experience. Mr. Lippmann's argument to his own people is the same.

No one in Britain or Canada or the United States is likely to dispute two facts, which are both cardinal. The first is the immense importance in the world to-day of North America's military, political and economic power. The greater part of that power is, of course, wielded by the United States, but Canada's contribution is already very considerable and will, I hope, increase rapidly. The other is the smallness of the Atlantic Ocean in this air age, which has extended the defensive frontiers of every country far beyond its political frontiers and greatly modified the conditions of sea power.

Western Europe, the north-western shoulder of Africa, and the Atlantic islands now form a single strategic area with the eastern face of the American continent from Greenland to Brazil. In this area the position occupied by Canada is of special importance because it is central for air communications. The question of Canadian security is therefore no longer confined to defence of a land frontier which Canada will never be called upon to defend. It reaches out to all the areas from which air power can strike at the North American continent. Nor is it merely a question of out-lying air bases with the sea-routes which govern their supply. It is quite as much a question of preventing an aggregation of hostile power, in Europe or in Asia, which could demand control of such bases by the threat of war. It is in Western Europe that, for a long period to come, the main danger of that contingency will reside.

The reality of the need of outlying airbases for the defence of North America has been recognized by the United Kingdom Government, and it will not end with the achievement of victory over Germany. There are no doubt some open questions requiring adjustment which arise from the leases and other war facilities arranged between Britain and the United States; but all such questions are governed, whatever their complexity, by an outstanding common interest in future security for peace, and are therefore certain to be settled on terms by which the various interests concerned, including those of the local inhabitants, are satisfactorily met.

Air bases and sea routes are, however, not the whole of the problem or even the most important aspect of it. The essence of security is to provide that the outer network of bases—including the British Isles—shall not be exposed to menace from a concentration of military power in the western part of the European continent. I have already dealt with this question

from the European standpoint. It all comes back to the "Butter but No Guns" problem in Germany and therefore to the relations between Russia and the Western family.

The Future of France

The future of France will rank very high amongst the factors to be reckoned with. Britain lies on the flank of the necessary western association; France is its centre. The thought and feeling of forty million Frenchmen will not cease to be important because French military power will have greatly diminished. There is a pride in France which will not suffer tutelage, particularly from Powers to whose indifference she attributes much of the blame for her long calvary, and no one can predict the way in which it will assert itself when free to do so.

If our action towards her is badly advised, she may think British and American ascendancy as intolerable as Germany's, and we may find it hard to secure what we shall greatly need—her friendship and cooperation. I come back in this context to Admiral Mahan, who had an insight peculiarly his own into international relations:—

"The sentiment of a people is the most energetic element in national action. Even when material interests are the original exciting cause, it is the sentiment to which they give rise, the moral tone which emotion takes, that constitutes the greater force."

That is certainly true of the British peoples, in whose pragmatic minds the moral and material are indistinguishably blended; but it is no less true of the French, despite their much more intellectual nature.

It is essential in our relations with France to bear in mind the facts of recent history. Since 1870 France has suffered terribly, and it does not lie with other democracies to condemn the faults of the Third Republic as though they stood alone. Western Europe would have succumbed to Germany in the earlier phases of the first World War if France had not stemmed her onset by the sacrifice of two million French lives. The fact that victory was afterwards achieved by heavy British sacrifice and potent American aid does not relieve us of the duty of remembering that France endured the fiercest brunt of that great struggle and suffered for us all. We forgot it in our last peace-making, with the result that peace collapsed after a brief twenty years. We must not forget it again.

Her population, already too weak in 1939 for the burden it was called upon to bear, has been most terribly reduced and weakened by these years of starvation and servitude. She has bled so much in a hundred and fifty years that she could not, even if she would, aspire to anything resembling her former military strength. But the French are a very great people, "inveterate", as George Meredith said, "of brain". Their diplomacy will be powerful in Europe, despite all that has been done. Their Empire has stood faithful to them in face of every humiliation, and they will have influence in all continents when their genius for recuperation has once again been manifested.

There has long been a school of thought in France which believed in European unity against an "Anglo-Saxon" ascendancy based on economic power. Laval is not its only apostle. It is rife amongst the masters of industry and capital; and the *petit bourgeois* mind of urban France has strong affinities with the inglorious calculations which have often inspired such bodies as the *Comité des Forges*. Mr. Lippmann therefore seems to me wise in warning his own countrymen that "the New World cannot afford to be isolated against the combined forces of the Old World".¹ Britain has particular cause to note it since she belongs to both and would go down between them if they were ever divided by discordant ideologies. Nor would she succumb alone. Rich and powerful as they are, the United States and Canada could not count upon the support of Portuguese or Spanish America if Western Europe were hostile to them; nor could they count on Russia. The world is round, and by no means as large as it used to be. Russia is a Pacific Power, and important to the eastern as well as to the western interests of the Atlantic Community.

In handling immediate war problems we must remember that the real test of our policies will lie in the future. Europe is now for the greater part a chaos whose resources and controls Germany has for three years been gathering to herself. It will have to be fed, released from the all-pervading German stranglehold, and enabled by degrees to resume its normal way of life. Our task is to recreate a system proof against the conditions which have hitherto caused war when a new generation has come into being, twenty, thirty and forty years hence. We cannot in this generation do more than lay foundations, establish those condi-

¹ *United States Foreign Policy*, page 67.

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tions and arrangements which are most likely, in the light of experience, to make for balance and contentment. The coming generation will have every reason to thank us, if, like Monroe and Canning in the Atlantic sphere one hundred and twenty years ago, we do as much as that.

Part of the international difficulties which followed the last war were due to the long spiritual strain through which the peoples and personalities of Europe had passed. At an international conference one never knew when some display of jangled nerves might not rock the business of the moment as suddenly as a Mediterranean squall and as violently. The atmosphere was always charged with electricity. The British delegates and (for a time) the American did their best as lightning-conductors ; but the voltage was high and the fuses overworked. In the next few years the atmosphere will be, if possible, more tense and difficult.

We must not dictate or even preach, if we are to work for peace successfully. Our greatest weakness is to believe that economic arrangements which seem sensible and profitable to us will commend themselves to every one else. We must not wash our hands of the business because others think differently, and tell Europe to take or leave our propositions—not, that is, if we want to see Europe reintegrated. Economic imperialism combined with political and military isolationism may seem a tempting course ; but it would end infallibly in a European combination calamitous to our most vital interests. These dangers are, I suspect, better appreciated in London than in Washington, if one may judge by our respective dealings with France.

There is no doubt that just as General de Gaulle has been difficult in the last three years, France herself will be difficult hereafter, whatever leaders she chooses and whatever system of government. We should remember; however, that de Gaulle's great act of faith in June, 1940, not only saved French honour but gave the Allies the support of a most important section of the French Empire. It is just as well, for us no less than France, that French Equatorial Africa did not go the way of Indo-China ; just as well, too, that in Morocco, Algeria and Tunis we have been able to hand over control to a French administration. Foreign occupations are never popular, and we should steer as wide as possible of German methods of dictation, in Europe as well as Africa.

General de Gaulle has rendered noble service to the Allies as well as France. If he is intransigent, as he is, that is in French character, and it is open to doubt whether a more adaptable mind would have made the Fighting French the vanguard of the spiritual force through which, in France itself, resistance and recovery have sprung to life. Some words he used in 1942 are typical :—

"In the situation in which France finds herself, there are no compromises, no transactions conceivable. What would our country have become if Jeanne d'Arc, Danton, Clemenceau had wanted to compromise? From disaster to victory, the straight road is the shortest and also the safest".

Joan of Arc was, unconsciously, the first French Nationalist ; and the Cross of Lorraine is a symbol of French nationalism at its proudest and most sensitive. George Meredith's lines, written in the black winter of 1870, are strangely prophetic both of Pétain's treachery and of the revolt it would kindle when its significance came home to France's merciless intelligence, never drugged or deceived for long :—

"Whom the just Gods abandon have no light
No ruthless light of introspective eyes
That in the midst of misery scrutinize
The heart and its iniquities outright.
They rest, they smile and rest ; have earned perchance
Of ancient service quiet for a term,
Quiet of old men dropping to the worm ;
And so goes out the soul.

But not of France.

She cries for grief, and to the Gods she cries,
For fearfully their loosened hands chastize,
And icily they watch the rod's caress
Ravage her flesh from scourges merciless,
But she, inveterate of brain, discerns
That Pity has as little place as Joy
Among their roll of gifts ; for Strength she yearns,
For Strength, her idol once, too long her toy."

The retribution which Frenchmen inflict on Frenchmen will assuredly be fierce ; it has already begun. But France will be strong of mind again, if never so strong of arm, and Britain is pledged to stand by her as a friend. "I declare", said Mr. Churchill to General de Gaulle in his memorandum of August 7, 1940, "that His Majesty's Government is determined, when the Allied arms shall have won the victory, to insure the complete restoration of the independence and greatness of France". That declaration was not merely an act of faith, it was an act of wisdom ;

and the whole Atlantic Community is concerned in it, since the West can never be safe against Germany without loyalty to its cause in its central citadel, which is France.

The process will be slow and difficult. France was never popular in England, and she is less so than ever to-day. The general opinion is that "she let us down" and can never be relied upon. The French have much the same deepseated doubt about perfidious Albion. Sentiment is important, and our Governments will have to explain the facts of international life with far more candour than hitherto, if the plain truth that the security of France and Britain, and therefore of the United States and Canada, are in the last resort inseparable is to be generally appreciated.

An injured or dissatisfied France would be perilous. The line she followed would inevitably influence the other Latin nations, and it would take her sooner or later, on what terms she could secure, into the arms of Germany. The Anglo-Russian alliance would then begin to wither, for it would no longer give Russia the essential guarantee of sufficient power in the West to complement her eastern watch upon German rearmament; and the Concert of Europe, instead of buttressing the security of Britain and the Western Hemisphere, would become a menace to it.

Mr. Lippmann has declared as an American that "the security of France is indispensable to the security of the New World". As an Englishman, whose sons will be called upon to pay the price of a mistaken foreign policy, I endorse his opinion fervently. For it would not be in England only that the coming generation would suffer for our folly. To whatever part of the English-speaking world my sons might go, the curse would follow them, darken their horizon, and jeopardize their heritage.

The English-Speaking Peoples

Population is an important matter, and its distribution in the Atlantic Community is worth considering. (I give round figures). Europe west of Denmark, Germany and the Adriatic contains about 180 millions. The English-speaking members of the Atlantic Community—that is, Great Britain, Ireland, the United States and Canada number about 190 millions. The Latin peoples on both sides of the Atlantic number about 150 millions. The whole family of peoples deriving from western civilization

in all parts of the world totals just short of 400 millions, of which 385 millions are in the Atlantic area. The Atlantic Community therefore is western civilization. It has made the world of today what it is, and it will be the principal force in making the world of tomorrow whatever it may become.

India alone, by contrast, contains 400 millions, China and Japan about 500 millions. Russia, now containing about 180 millions, is expected by the experts to reach 300 millions by the end of this century. Practically throughout the group of western nations on both sides of the Atlantic the reproduction rate has been falling steadily. Among the eastern groups it shows no sign of flagging.

The mind of man, as I said at the beginning of this book, is more important than the material universe. The strength and achievement of western civilization is out of all proportion to its numbers, and it still has an immense command of mental, moral and material resources. But population is an essential element in security. The trends, of course, may alter; I hope they will. Having been alive for a good many years, I am inclined to think more highly every year of the virtues of age and experience. But a serious disproportion between old and young is not good for any community, and western civilization is at present moving towards a phase in which the young will be carrying an undue load of old age pensioners.

No one would be foolish enough to suggest that western civilization should regard itself as in conflict with the rest of humanity. Its duty and its interest are all the other way—towards sharing its achievements and seeking to extend them by partnership with other civilizations. But if it is divided against itself, the contrary will happen. Everyone in this country is deeply conscious of the wounds which it has had to inflict upon itself in the course of this grim struggle for survival. We must prevent, if we can, a repetition of that carnage, that moral and material disfigurement.

For that the main responsibility will rest upon the Atlantic Community, and more particularly on its English-speaking members. They have at present the power and the responsibility of leadership which goes with it. They believe in democratic and responsible government, and they are the only peoples who have made a success of it—they with their 200 millions in a world of 2,000 millions. Five of their nations have proved in two great

struggles the solidarity of their Commonwealth. One of them, Britain, has formed a twenty years alliance with the Soviet Union.

But the unwritten alliance of the Commonwealth together with the Anglo-Russian treaty are at present the only solid foundations on which the Atlantic Community rests. Britain has no secret engagements of any sort. France, bled white and shattered partly by evil leadership, partly by internal strife and disillusionment, and partly also (we must not forget) by the burden which our indifference imposed upon her, has been the cause of disagreement between London and Washington. With her example and experience before us, are we to resume as individual polities the primrose path of isolation and disunion? No man can at present tell, but I feel nevertheless that the slow tides of opinion are moving favourably.

For Britain, at any rate, the right course seems to me unmistakable. She has started upon it with the Anglo-Russian Alliance. She must strive to complement that instrument with a Western European Alliance in which she does not shirk from definite military commitments, and she must also seek, with Russia, her Western European Allies and the other European States to recreate a Concert of Europe which will bring its nations together as a civilized family. All that may be done; but the prospect that it will be done, and done with real effectiveness for peace and security, depends upon cooperation in some concrete form from the two peoples west of the Atlantic with whom she has the closest natural ties.

So far as Britain is concerned, an alliance between Canada, the United States and herself formed for the special purpose of reinforcing the Anglo-Russian alliance, the Western European alliance and the Concert of European Powers is bound to be a central aim of foreign policy. I believe such an arrangement, whatever diplomatic or political form it may be given, to be indispensable to the peace and welfare of the whole Atlantic Community. I believe, in broader terms, that the future of western civilization depends upon it.

The Movement of Opinion

Opinion seems to be forming hopefully upon these lines on both sides of the Atlantic. Just after I had written the foregoing paragraph, I read in *The Times* a speech by Mr. Thomas Dewey, the Governor of New York State. The following passages, which

indicate a parallel movement of independent thought, are given verbatim in it :—

"No initial measures against Germany and Japan, however drastic, will have permanent value unless they fall within the setting of durable cohesion between Great Britain and ourselves, together, I hope with Russia and China. . . .

"We may again be tempted to feel that with the defeat of our enemies and the proclamation of peace we can afford to rest on our oars. But the truth is, those years that follow will be decisive. The maintenance of peace will require continuing labour and forbearance. When we have ceased to wage war we shall have to wage peace. Germany and Japan must not only be utterly defeated and disarmed—they must not be left in a post-war environment which might enable them to manoeuvre as a balance of power.

"After 1919, lethargy, jealousy, and power politics resumed sway among the allies. In that environment Germany quickly eluded the controls of the Treaty of Versailles. If after this war we reproduce the same political climate we will get the same results."

Mr. Dewey's reference to "power politics" was, I assume, intended to mean that we must not allow Germany to revive a competition in armaments, since it is evident from the whole passage that he regards the maintenance of effective power by law-abiding States as indispensable to the preservation of peace. He was wise in what he said about the "climate" of the western world after the last peace settlement. That is what we have to preclude by every means we possess ; but we shall not preclude it if we fail to keep the western nations together and show the fullest possible regard for the rights and feelings of the smaller States.

In this context a broadcast to his own countrymen by the Netherlands Minister for Foreign Affairs, is very much to the point. Mr. Kleffens declared at the outset that by general agreement amongst his countrymen Holland's "pre-war policy of aloofness is stone-dead". So much for neutrality in the post-war world. He went on to say that Nazi education has turned the present younger generation of Germans into "a nation of savages whose official doctrine of salvation is nothing but the code of morals of beasts of prey", and then discussed the international association necessary to cage that nation round about :—

". . . The main thing is that we may hope that, instructed by bitter experience and by a wider understanding, the U.S.A. may acquire a consciousness of the vital interests of America in the effective preservation of peace in Europe. Twice the people of the U.S.A. has seen that a German aggression against the Netherlands, Belgium and France is in fact an attack on England, and I believe that it realises more clearly than previously that with the fall of England a dagger would be placed upon the heart of the United States.

"If things move in this direction we would see a strong formation in the west with America, Canada and the other British Dominions as the arsenal and vast reservoir of power, with England as the base, especially for airpower, and the west of the European mainland—by which I mean the Netherlands, Belgium and France—as the bridgehead. A development of this nature would indeed compel us to rely upon the western Powers, but, conversely, they would also need us. It is difficult to imagine a stronger position for our country.

"This formidable western block would find its eastern counterpart in Russia. Once Japan has been defeated, Russia's heart will be protected to the north, and east and the south by natural frontiers. But like ourselves it will have to devote its full and continued attention—and it will wish to do so—to the security of its open frontier on the German side. This picture brings as it were automatically to the fore the need for the preservation of good relations between the Netherlands and the Soviet Union.

"If all this could be achieved, it looks in my view as though a long period of peace were guaranteed. . . ."¹

This is another notable example of the fact that thought amongst the leaders of Western civilization is growing more compact.

The Genius of the Air

That civilization has rubbed its magic ring, and the genius of the air has hastened from the vast empyrean to serve it. For what end? Hitherto, alas, mainly that civilized humanity might lacerate itself and steep itself in carnage on a scale which no one could have imagined at the opening of this century. I am not one of those who believe that the genius of nationalism must surrender to the genius of the air, in order that the latter may be a blessing rather than a curse to the human race. This is another matter in which practical compromise between the leading nations will serve us better than a grandiose and sweeping universalism.

But it is surely not unreasonable to hope that air power, while spreading the risks of war and shattering the isolation of continents, will increase the contact of nations and forge new bonds between those who can best ensure their common civilization against abuse of its immense potentialities. The Atlantic has been shrunk by it to very small dimensions, and those who summoned the new power to life will be wise to recognize that it has made their vital interests inseparable.

¹ Broadcast on Radio Orange, December 28th 1943. The full text is given in Appendix I. A similar pronouncement by the Prime Minister of Poland dated May 3rd, 1944, is given in Appendix II.

CHAPTER XVI

THE ECONOMIC UNITY OF THE COMMONWEALTH

The cohesion of the British Empire and Commonwealth is not a purely British interest. We should not be discussing the problem of a world order in conformity with western ideals if that Empire and Commonwealth had not stood united against Germany all through the fateful year which followed the defeat of France. Western Europe would have passed for a long period under the yoke of a different creed, and Japanese imperialism could not have been effectively challenged in the Far East. For the whole Atlantic Community independence and security would have gone by the board.

The British Empire and Commonwealth has never, for its part, challenged the independence of a single civilized nation. "Free institutions are its life-blood", as Lord Balfour's Committee declared in 1926, and it has done more for human freedom than any existing State or group of States. It is itself a still imperfect but living example of the kind of world order which all the western nations have at heart, and it could not fall into disunity without imperilling the cause for which the two World Wars of this century have been fought.

But it is not the product purely of political or constitutional wisdom, though this has been essential to it. It is not the creation of purely British sentiment, much as that sentiment has counted in keeping it intact. It owes its strength, and in some essential ways its cohesion, to the economic policy pursued by its leading members during the last fifty years, and economic policy will continue to be indispensable to both. No study of British foreign policy would therefore be complete without some brief account of what British economic unity means, not only for the Commonwealth itself but for all other progressive and peace-abiding States.

British Trade Policy

It is not necessary for that purpose to review British trade policy over a number of years, but only to mark the important turning points and their results—and more especially the fact

that the strength of the young Colonies (as they then were) was built up from the outset by Imperial Preference. (Trade statistics are dreary things, and I shall only give a few; the movements of population are sometimes an even better index of effects.) It is also important to note that from the period immediately following the forties to 1931, nearly a century, when the great depression forced this country to adopt a moderate protective tariff, our very low duties were levied purely for revenue purposes. In the matter of barriers to trade our record is, by comparison with that of other great countries, beyond reproach.

It is in fact from the opening of British Colonial trade to foreign countries by Huskisson in 1823 that the principle of Imperial Preference first dates. Under the old mercantile system that trade had been closed. Huskisson opened it subject to a very low range of duties, varying from 7 to 15 per cent., from which British goods were exempt. The colonies in return were given a substantial preference in the British market and began a period of rapid growth. Canada, for instance, attracted 532,000 British immigrants between 1815 and 1840 as against 458,000 who went to the United States. It is tragic to reflect what her development might have been in the rest of that century if Huskisson's policy had not been reversed.

None of the stalwarts of Free Trade, which started with the abolition of the Corn Laws in 1846, ever troubled to conceal his belief that the new dispensation would tell against the British Colonies. The disintegration of the Empire appeared to Cobden to be a good thing, and he expressed an open desire for it. "The Colonial system", he wrote, "with all its dazzling appeals to the passions of the people, can never be got rid of except by the indirect process of free trade, which will gradually and imperceptibly loose the bonds which unite our colonies to us by a mistaken notion of self-interest".¹ To deprive the British peoples of their interest in each other by stealth was an odd ambition for a democrat; but the Manchester School had other undemocratic foibles which it is best to forget.

Parliament had approved in 1840 the grant of responsible self-government to Canada, and that great country might well have expanded with the dazzling vigour of the United States; but the abolition of the Corn Laws paralyzed her agricultural

¹ John Morley's *Life of Cobden*. Vol. I., page 230.

and industrial development to the benefit of her great southern neighbour, who quite rightly took full advantage of it, though ten years later she came to Canada's rescue with a reciprocity treaty which compensated for British neglect. "All the prosperity of which Canada is robbed", wrote Lord Elgin, who was Governor-General from 1846 to 1854, "is transplanted to the other side of the line, as if to make the Canadian feel more bitterly how much kinder England is to the children who desert her than to those who remain faithful". But Free Trade was a religion, inflicting almost equal damage and as ruthlessly upon the West Indies and the Cape. It is remarkable that the germs of the future Commonwealth survived, since the modest duties which protected British export to the Colonies were also abolished in 1848.

The Colonies struggled through, but British policy continued much more favourable to American development than to theirs. Between 1841 and 1866, for instance, only 677,000 British emigrants went to Canada by comparison with 2,640,000 who went to the United States. Population is an important matter, as we and they have since discovered, and in its economic policy no part of the Commonwealth can henceforth afford to be indifferent to it.

The Turn of the Tide

The tide did not begin to turn till 1887, the date of Queen Victoria's Jubilee and the first Colonial Conference. Inter-Colonial preferences were established at an Economic Conference which met in Ottawa at the invitation of the Canadian Government: in 1894, the United Kingdom being barred by a provision in its trade treaties with Germany and Belgium from accepting preference for its own benefit. Despite these treaties Sir Wilfrid Laurier, by then Liberal Prime Minister of Canada, announced in 1897 a unilateral reduction of duty on British goods amounting to one-eighth of the General Tariff rates and rising to one quarter in 1898. In the same year the Colonial Conference concurrent with Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee called for the denunciation of the obnoxious treaties, which (according to the British Law Officers) compelled extension of the Canadian preference to Germany and many other countries; and the United Kingdom Government took action accordingly. It is noteworthy that the Canadian Government provided by regulation that "25 per cent. of the completed cost of manufactured articles must represent

British labour in order to entitle the articles to come under the preference”.

At the Imperial Conferences of 1902, 1907 and 1911 the Dominions (as they soon afterwards became) reiterated their faith in the policy of reciprocal preference. That of 1902 decided Mr. Joseph Chamberlain to launch his great campaign for Tariff Reform. The Conservative party was not, however, united on the issue and was overwhelmingly defeated at the General Election of 1906. From that time up to the first World War Liberal Ministers in Britain were bound by their election pledges against any departure from insular free trade; but Mr. Lloyd George used some prophetic words at the 1907 Conference which showed his personal sympathy with the Dominion point of view :

“We heartily concur (he said) in the view which has been presented by Colonial Ministers that the Empire would be a great gainer if much of the products now purchased from foreign countries could be produced and purchased within the Empire. In Britain, we have the greatest market in the world. We are the greatest purchasers of produce raised or manufactured outside our own boundaries. A very large proportion of this produce could very well be raised in the Colonies, and any reasonable and workable plan that would tend to increase the proportion of the produce which is bought by us from the Colonies, and by the Colonies from us and from each other, must necessarily enhance the resources of the Empire as a whole. A considerable part of the surplus population of the United Kingdom, which now goes to foreign lands in search of a livelihood, might then find it to its profit to pitch its tents somewhere under the Flag, and the Empire would gain in riches of material and men.

“The federation of free Commonwealths is worth making some sacrifice for. One never knows when its strength may be essential to the great cause of human freedom, and that is priceless.”

That was seven years before the first World-War. It was fitting that after it Mr. Lloyd George should have been the Prime Minister under whom reciprocal preferences were first established (in 1919) by the United Kingdom Government. They were extended by Mr. Churchill (then Chancellor of the Exchequer) in 1925 and again in 1932 by Joseph Chamberlain's son. With some slight change of idiom, the broad case could hardly be better stated in 1944 than it was by Mr. Lloyd George in 1907. Laurier, Chamberlain, Lloyd George, Churchill—all of them statesmen who have rendered memorable service to liberal causes, all of them great men. For what are we asked to sacrifice a Commonwealth policy so long in coming to fruition and so vital to the unity which has twice altered the history of the world?

Party Opinion

Let one point, at the outset, be plain. There is no sign whatever in the United Kingdom of the ancient party divisions on the subject which delayed the coming of full reciprocal preferences so long. Britain was forced by circumstances to adopt a protective tariff in 1931. Despite the defection of Liberal members from the Coalition Government after the second Ottawa Conference in 1932, it was generally supposed at the time that the policy of Imperial Preference had been placed above party controversy for good. The Ottawa agreements have been criticized for one reason or another since, but not in the main on party lines. They were unpopular in the United States, and they were held in some financial circles to militate against the policy of unrestricted individualism in capital investment overseas which was then still regarded as sound. There was, however, no serious doubt in any important quarter that the fundamental change in British fiscal policy had proved its value and come to stay.

In the first place, it struck at unemployment and gave to British industry a new impulse which was urgently required. Trade restrictions were rising everywhere outside the Empire and Commonwealth, but within it the vitality of trade revived. Between 1932 and 1937 our imports from foreign countries rose from £454 millions to £624 millions, an increase of 37 per cent. Our imports from Empire countries rose from £248 millions to £405 millions, an increase of 64 per cent., which lifted them from 35.3 per cent. to 39.4 per cent. of our total import trade. The character of the rise shows how important it was for employment at home. In the years, 1931 to 1937, our imports of food, drink and tobacco increased by £16 millions only, from £416 millions to £432. Our imports of manufactures increased by £14 millions only, from £261 millions to £275. But our imports of raw material for industry increased from £173 millions to £315, a rise of £142 millions or 82 per cent.

It is furthermore hardly to be questioned that the expansion of sterling trade gave stability to the sterling area when this country had been forced off gold. Rapid depreciation had been a nightmare, not only in the Empire but in the United States. Sterling, however, stood remarkably firm—mainly, it would seem, because so high a proportion of our essential imports came from within the sterling area. In 1901 they were only £108.7

millions. In 1937 they were £338 millions. With every allowance for alterations in value, this was a noteworthy and highly fortunate change.

Finally, the Dominions profited greatly by the new consideration which they received. Viscount Bennett, who was Prime Minister of Canada at the time of the Ottawa Conference, has declared that in the view of Canada's leading men of business it saved the Dominion from widespread calamity. Other countries of the Empire had no less reason to be grateful for its work. Looking back on world events in 1940 and 1941, we are entitled to say that all free countries are indebted to it, since it conserved for the Commonwealth the economic strength which saved it in the first phase of this war.

So far at least as the two main parties in this country, Conservative and Socialist, are concerned, there can be no question of a return to Victorian individualist and free trade principles. The State must henceforth direct the main lines of financial and commercial activity more closely than before. The parties may have different views on method, the one preferring the indirect method of tariffs, the other the direct method of State purchase and wider State control; but very few remain to contend that the unrestricted freedom of the Victorian and Edwardian ages is either desirable or practicable in the present state of the world.

Long ago, at the Imperial Conference of 1907, Mr. Alfred Deakin, then Prime Minister of Australia, made a declaration of policy which both the main parties in this country would now accept:—

"To us it appears (he said) that henceforth the individual will become more and more dependent upon the social and national structure in which he finds a place. It makes all the difference whether you are grains of sand or the same grains compacted into solid rock. Anything that encourages the development of Imperial organization, which, without limiting the self-governing powers of the several parts, or unduly trespassing on the individual liberty of the citizen, shall compact them together in cooperative relations for the discharge of social duties, political obligations and industrial efforts—every possible increase in cooperation—marks a higher stage in civilization, giving greater opportunities to the individual and greater strength to the nation. That is a political gospel."¹

The Dominions used to be ahead of the United Kingdom in this conception. I do not think they are so today.

¹ Official Report, page 238.

The American View

The challenge to the economic unity of the Empire and Commonwealth does not, then, spring from party disagreement in the United Kingdom or from any self-generated change of opinion in other parts of the Commonwealth. It springs entirely, to be frank, from the United States; and our concern about it is a speaking proof of the universal British desire for the greatest possible measure of understanding and cooperation between the American Union and the Commonwealth. It is therefore highly germane to any study of British foreign policy, and I have attempted a bird's-eye review of the history of Imperial Preference as the necessary background for candid discussion of it.

The policy of Imperial Preference is safeguarded in the Atlantic Charter, and rightly so, since that agreement was not intended to give one of its original signatories a decisive trade advantage over the other one. But Article VII of the "master agreements" for Lend-Lease speaks of "the elimination of all forms of discriminatory treatment in international commerce"; and the present Administration in the United States appears to be wedded to the view that reciprocal preferences within the Empire and Commonwealth should be subject to a rigorous interpretation of the Most Favoured Nation Clause, which would in practice make them of no effect.

In other words, the American Government is seeking to reimpose upon the Commonwealth the stranglehold, so deleterious to its unity, from which it freed itself at the instance of Canada and all the Dominions in 1898—the stranglehold to which I have already referred, imposed principally by the Anglo-German trade treaty of 1862.

It is not known to what extent the American Administration and Congress may be prepared to lower the enormous tariff wall which protects American industry in return for our agreement on this point, nor whether it would simultaneously reform the meticulous subdivisions in the American tariff which deprive the Most Favoured Nation Clause of practically all value to foreign importers, so far as the American market goes. No answers can be forthcoming to these questions in this Presidential year; but a sanguine view is not much encouraged by the present signs in the firmament.

Imperial Preference

Whatever the prospects may be, they cannot justify any radical departure in this country from the principle of "the British family first". It is not possible for us to make that principle the subject of a bargain, because nothing could compensate, either in British or world interests, for a reaction in policy which would infallibly, if gradually, undermine the unity of the Commonwealth. That, and nothing less, is the issue at stake.

There are speakers and writers both in this country and in America who maintain that such a principle is inconsistent with international co-operation and with the progressive liberation of commerce and exchange from national impediments. I dissent emphatically from that opinion. No country stands to gain more than Britain by the lowering of hostile tariffs and other obstacles to trade; none therefore should co-operate more gladly in any genuine international effort to bring greater freedom about. Imperial Preference can operate with equal fairness and effect, whether foreign tariffs be high or low; but so far from being an obstacle to their reduction, it is in truth one of the best instruments which the Empire possesses for securing it. The question implicit in the maintenance or abandonment of Imperial Preference is not the question whether the world shall move towards free trade. It is the question whether the Commonwealth is or is not to be regarded as an economic unit in its relations with other Powers. It is, in other words, the question whether the Commonwealth is in fact what its name implies a Commonwealth, or a multitude of unconnected nations and States, each of which is to be treated as a separate economic unit by foreign Powers.

We have seen that the future of the world in its next phase will depend upon the collaboration of the British Commonwealth, the United States and Russia. The Commonwealth cannot long remain an equal in that great company, unless it is united for all really vital purposes in its dealings with the rest of the world. If that be true of defence, it is equally true in the economic field. The United States and Russia both command a vast expanse of contiguous territory and a wealth of natural resources, united for economic purposes under a single central Government. The enlightened ruler of Modern China has the same aim. America will not concede that the economic relations of the States of the

Union should be subject to criticism or intervention by foreign Powers; the very idea is ludicrous. Nor has it occurred to her leaders that her tariff arrangements with such outlying territories as Hawaii should be subject to the operation of the Most Favoured Nation Clause. For her part, Russia will never give a moment's consideration to the idea that economic relations between the many Socialist and Soviet Republics of the U.S.S.R. should be an open field for foreign competitors and that each Republic should attempt to deal as a separate economic unit with foreign Powers.

If the Commonwealth is to be a Commonwealth, and if it is to remain the equal of those gigantic self-contained economic systems, the idea that it is not to be regarded as an economic unit is equally absurd. I say, then, that as a matter of economic standing in the world the Commonwealth must assert its right to be recognized as a single economic system, free to help and foster its own members as it pleases, whether by preferential tariffs or by any other means, without exposure to the disrupting tendencies of the Most Favoured Nation Clause¹.

It is, in sober truth, beyond reason for Americans to argue that the United States and Russia are entitled to secure for themselves, without consideration of that Clause, the full benefit of their vast internal markets while denying a corresponding internal freedom to the nations of the Commonwealth. All those nations are free to make what trade arrangements their respective Parliaments think fit. They can abide by the principle of Imperial Preference or modify or abandon it as they measure their own interests. There can never be a control over the markets of the Commonwealth such as is exercised in their own markets by the Soviet and American Governments.

The cardinal decision does not, in any case, rest with the Dominions. Some of their present Governments are tackling world-issues with admirable intention but with little international experience; all are bound to be strongly influenced by American policy, since they share our own convinced belief that they and the world will alike fare ill if disagreement develops between the United States and the Commonwealth. The cardinal decision rests with the United Kingdom, which must, in my conviction, abide by its established view that any advant-

¹ These three paragraphs are taken from *The British Commonwealth*, 1943, pp. 103-5.

ages it may grant to its own family are its own affair, whatever the other members may do about it.

Their own home market is the greatest asset which the people of the United Kingdom possess. Are they, or are they not, to be free to use it as they think fit in their own interests and that of the Commonwealth? Neither Russia nor the United States would dream of parting with such liberty; yet neither of those Powers has a responsibility comparing with that of the United Kingdom to its scattered brotherhood of sovereign nations. No free people can honourably or even sanely consent to bargain away a vital liberty. The right to use our greatest asset, the home market, as we think best in the interests of the Empire and Commonwealth, not only now but through a period of change which cannot be foreseen or prepared for in advance, is a vital liberty. It may be used as we please in trade treaties, since these are subject to modification from time to time; it cannot rightly be signed away in over-riding commitments from which neither we nor our posterity can honourably escape, whatever prove to be their consequences.

CHAPTER XVII

BRITAIN AND THE UNITED STATES

MR. RICHARD JEBB, who proved himself a pioneer in the interpretation of Commonwealth relations with his *Studies in Colonial Nationalism*, published in 1905, once observed that "nations in the making are masters of their fate, but only for a time". He added with a wisdom which we should bear in mind to-day that, "having chosen their economic policy, they cannot bid posterity repudiate the consequences".* Great declarations of principle which anticipate and govern the future should never be made without remembering that human foresight is limited. We can rightly plan and bind ourselves for conditions which we are able to appraise. We have no right to mortgage those who come after us in any measure not imposed upon us by the necessities of our own brief period.

* The Imperial Conference, published in 1911, Vol. 1. p.XXXII.

Trade bargains are usually of a temporary character ; but even on that level we should look with care to ultimate as well as more immediate consequences. Immediate benefit is not in all cases the best criterion, especially in dealing with a country like the United States in which Governments are always under conflicting pressures and liable to quadrennial change. Our American friends are, it seems, genuinely afraid of being "out-smarted" by us. There was assuredly no outsmarting on our part in the formative years of the nineteenth century, when British naval power and fiscal policy had greater value for the American people than any counter-benefit received from them by the growing British Commonwealth ; and I am persuaded by my own experience that it has not been true for the last quarter of a century, during which our mutual relations have gained very greatly in importance for both of us.

Who Outsmarted Who ?

I was not myself at the Peace Conference of 1919, and I would not question the view that the French and British delegates were themselves to blame for staking so much on the word of an American President who had neglected to provide himself with adequate Senatorial support ; but I can vividly remember a whole series of other episodes which convince me that American opinion on international questions is little affected by foreign blandishments or by what (to use a military term) I may call the diplomacy of "indirect approach". American Ambassadors in London are sometimes innocently misleading on this point.

I remember, for instance, being told on very high authority when I was with Mr. Lloyd George in 1921, that if Britain abandoned the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, certain other matters in which she had need of American cooperation would be greatly advanced. For that amongst other reasons the Anglo-Japanese treaty was denounced, but the American attitude towards Europe remained aloof and unhelpful. There was still, I was told, the trouble about self-government for Ireland, and that was disposed of in the following year—with equally little effect. One major question, we were then assured, was still outstanding—the funding of the war debt. On that the plunge was taken by Mr. Baldwin, much (I have always understood) to Mr. Bonar Law, the new Prime Minister's distress. It did not make things better ;

on the contrary, it made them worse. So far therefore as "outsmarting" is concerned, we have, I think, quite as much to learn as to teach in our exchanges with our American friends.

I am not, of course, suggesting that we had any excuse for misjudgement in the instances quoted, or indeed that we took action for any reason other than our own appraisal of what would best befit and serve us in conditions which gave great scope for differences of opinion. I recall them only to show that American action does not infallibly react to ours in the manner predicted by politicians or diplomats.

An American General, who has had much recent experience of representative Britons, has observed, I am told, that he never leaves a conference with them without feeling that they have taken the shirt off his back, but that they return it in due course "washed and ironed, with most of the buttons on". I would not personally endorse that tribute, though it is a flattering one; nor do I think Americans right in supposing, as many in my experience do, that foreigners like them better than they like the other English-speaking peoples. My own impression is that foreigners dislike us all equally because of the lords of creation attitude to which Britons and Americans alike are predisposed by a natural and unconscious insularity; and our mutual relations are certainly a mystery to all of them. But one thing I regard as beyond dispute, namely, that we both like candid dealing, and understand each other best when we speak our minds freely. That is why I deprecate the diplomacy of indirect approach. Britain should not, for instance, have funded the war debt when she conscientiously believed it wrong to do so; it led to nothing but worse recrimination.

These stories are worth recalling, since we are hearing much on the same lines to-day about American views on India, the Colonies, Imperial Preference and Lend-Lease. Let it be clear that these are matters on which we cannot be false to our responsibilities or act on any judgment but our own. Americans are, for instance, mistaken if they suppose that after all that has happened in this war we can ever regard ourselves as owing the same consideration to Argentine as to New Zealand meat. Family feeling in such matters is not mere sentiment, it is an active force that has made history, for the good of the whole world. No arrangement with foreigners that man can devise will ever be worth the sacrifice of it.

British Family Sentiment

The American sense of brotherhood within the American Union is so vital and inspiring that all Americans should understand its counterpart in the British Commonwealth. I have recently looked back at the *Democratic Campaign Textbook* for the Presidential election of 1904 which dealt with the Canadian preference to Britain. It observed that "from a decrease of 60 per cent. from 1873 to 1897 the preferential tariff had aided British merchants and manufacturers to sell more than 100 per cent. more goods in Canada in 1904 than they sold in 1897 . . . at the expense chiefly of the United States", and added that Mr. Chamberlain's campaign for reciprocity was "legitimate and business-like warfare". I quote this, not only because of its genial and sensible tone, but also because it illustrates a misunderstanding which ought, if possible, to be dispelled. Neither the United States nor Russia would be regarded as making trade war upon other nations, whether legitimate and business-like or not, if its Government took any step which it believed indispensable to the cohesion and unity of its own political system. If the British Empire and Commonwealth is to be regarded as a reality by its great Allies, it is entitled to the same rights and liberties.

In his illuminating broadcast of Easter Day, 1944, Mr. Cordell Hull, speaking with deliberation as American Secretary of State, said that "however difficult the road may be, there is no hope of turning victory into enduring peace unless the real interests of this country, the British Commonwealth, the Soviet Union and China are harmonized". Mr. Hull is revered for his sincerity, and it is certain that when he spoke of the British Commonwealth as an entity comparable with the American and Soviet Unions, he was using no mere phrase. But if that be the case, the internal freedom of its peoples and Governments can no more be questioned than that of the American and Soviet Unions.

It is, of course, very different in character from them. Those of its Governments which are sovereign in themselves enjoy a freedom much greater than that of any Soviet Republic or American State. The Dominions can pursue what policy they please, whether economic or political, in international affairs. Britain cannot control their action and has long discarded any wish to do so; but she and they are none the less entitled to make

the welfare of their Commonwealth a priority in economic and all other forms of policy without being accused on that account of making war on their chief Allies. Their right to do so has not been questioned by Russia or any other foreign country, the United States alone excepted. If the harmony to which Mr. Hull so truly points as indispensable is to be maintained, Americans must understand that on this cardinal issue, whatever the signs of the moment, our resolution is fixed.

I would only add that the Colonial question is a different one. Britain does in fact control the economic policy of many Colonies and cannot evade the direct responsibility for their welfare which sovereignty entails; but the economic progress of dependent Colonies is eminently a subject for discussion and agreement between the United States and other Colonial Powers. All these should govern and plan on the same broad principles, though regional arrangements will certainly be necessary to meet the variety of problems involved in Colonial administration.

The Position of Smaller States

Colonies apart, Britain has much to consider in her relations with western and central Europe which reinforces the arrangement for a broad and flexible view of economic policy. In claiming internal freedom for the Commonwealth she can point out with sincerity that the principle is not of importance to the Commonwealth alone. It is a notorious fact that the smaller European States suffered greatly in the Twenty Years' Truce from international arrangements such as the Most Favoured Nation Clause which prevented them from combining in groups for their own good. More especially was this the case after the economic depression of 1929-31. One most unfortunate result was the stranglehold established over some of them by Germany, Doctor Schacht in particular imposing a species of economic servitude upon them by methods of his own.

The remedy for that menace to the freedom of small States cannot be found solely in the removal of trade barriers. Most of these were hastily raised umbrellas; they did not cause the rain.

"If the record of the past proves anything, it is that other countries have consistently tended to purchase American goods and services in larger and more regular volume than the United States has bought of foreign goods and services and that the major handicap to exports has not

been trade restrictions abroad so much as the underlying shortage of dollars. The latter difficulty will be intensified unless the United States renders possible a freer flow of imports."¹

It is fair to note that the American Report from which the above passage is quoted recommends a vigorous prosecution of the reciprocal trade agreements favoured by the present American Administration. It also observes, however, that the reductions of tariff provided for in the agreements, which are limited by law to 50 per cent. of the existing rates, "have been cautiously negotiated with a view of minimizing the effects on domestic production".² The reductions affected by the agreements must in any event be weighed against the tariff itself, which is minutely subdivided and extremely high.

A great deal then turns upon the future tariff policy of the United States, and the prospect of modifications sufficiently far-reaching to justify a radical change of policy elsewhere is not at present bright. The report from which I have just quoted is remarkable for its candour and objectiveness, and it suggests that foreign countries may not be altogether unwise in refusing to tie their hands until American policy is more definite.

A recent report of the International Labour Office follows the American Report in emphasizing the need for a generous and well-directed flow of capital from those who possess it to those who do not; yet capital will never flow in adequate volume to countries with weak and ill-balanced economies in which it cannot be secure. The answer surely is that the smaller countries should be encouraged to organize themselves in suitable economic groups and thereby to acquire a collective economic strength which they cannot command alone. The process would be constructive. It would reduce the number of customs frontiers and form a safeguard against, rather than an inducement to, the multiplication of trade barriers, which are otherwise as certain to reappear when wanted as umbrellas in our great (though damp) metropolis.

The truth is that universalism is as unworkable in economic as in political affairs. The British Victorian ideal of a world without tariffs, in which business would be universally free from State control, has passed into limbo; since the cost of rising

¹ *The United States in the World Economy*, U.S. Department of Commerce, page 22.

Ibid., page 54.

wealth upon those terms was bigger and better slums, I rejoice at its demise. But the American Wilsonian ideal, picturing a world in which hosts of helpless little nations could look for peace and security to a universal guarantee, has proved equally impracticable; and intermediate organization is as indispensable from the economic as from the political standpoint. The only alternative is chronic insecurity, fatal even in peace to independence and true self-government for the mass of weaker nations.

The American Report from which I have already quoted presents this issue clearly, particularly in the admirable Foreword by Mr. Wayne C. Taylor, Under Secretary of Commerce.

"The record of the thirties (he writes) demonstrated that foreign countries, save for those narrowly dependent on the American market, could adapt themselves, after serious initial disturbances, to a relatively low level of exchange with the United States and yet attain a substantial internal prosperity and promote their trade with each other. And, in time, this country could also make the necessary adjustment in its export trade and domestic economy, although with difficulties exemplified by the agricultural policies of recent pre-war years. A world economy organized on this basis would unquestionably be less progressive and more subject to commercial restrictions and discriminations, but it is an altogether possible one."¹

My only criticism of this statement arises from a conviction that the road to prosperity is really broader than Mr. Taylor indicates. It is a rooted British foible to insist that salvation is not to be found in a choice between extreme and mutually exclusive alternatives. It is highly desirable that the American Union should liberalize its domestic economy; but it is equally desirable that other countries, and more particularly the weaker ones, should strengthen their own.

The economic predominance of the United States is a fact in world economy which it would be folly for other nations to ignore. The tables published in the American Report demonstrate it most impressively. But it is no less a fact that the interests of the varied States of the Union and of different sections of its population pull in diverse ways, and that they will not attain a balanced economy without bitter internal controversy and frequent readjustments. This latter certainty must be candidly taken into account. The nations of the world will react against any economic domination which is not very generously used, and

¹ *Ibid.*, page 24.

they cannot count upon a wholly liberal world economy until American economic policy is released from the powerful domestic influences which have so far governed it. American foreign investment must, for instance, in the long run depend upon the extent to which the American tariff allows for service of American loans in goods and services rather than in gold.

Compromise and Freedom

In the uncertain world that confronts us Britain also, while exercising much less economic power than the United States, has valuable assets at her disposal. Despite her smaller size she still offers the world a larger market than the United States and will probably long continue to do so. The importance of Imperial Preference derives from that fact. It is by far the most effective instrument that Britain still possesses for fostering the Empire and Commonwealth and furthering its development ; and it is precisely that essential freedom that would be compromised by the new commitments proposed to us by the present American Government.

Britain's other greatest remaining asset should stand her in good stead in this difficult situation. She still possesses in her banking, industrial and commercial community a knowledge of the world and an experience of international business without comparison. That priceless talent was not put to the best possible use during the Twenty Years' Truce, because both in finance and trade we were harking back to Victorian conditions which have gone for ever. The return to the gold standard, like the funding of the American debt, was a calamity ; and so was the failure of our industrial system to regenerate its plant and methods. But the knowledge and experience are there, and they can keep London the nerve-centre of world business if they are applied to new conditions with the vigour and fertility of resource which originally gained for London that great pre-eminence.

They will assuredly be necessary. The mysteries of exchange are beyond the grasp of amateurs, and trained economists are distinguished by their disagreements ; but on one point at least—that conditions will be difficult—their unanimity is by contrast as impressive as that of a chorus in Greek tragedy. Politicians with experience of the United States and other foreign countries can add with some assurance that politics will assist in complicat-

ing them. So much depends upon the United States that its politics need especial consideration, and it will be prudent to recognize that the conflicting interests of its States and the difficulties of its internal economy with many other causes will prevent it from adopting any clear-cut line of action comparable to that of Britain in the nineteenth century.

With such a prospect before it, the rest of the world will be wise to shape its course, not as a choice between logical extremes, but by way of compromise between them. Britain in particular can preserve her economic freedom with complete assurance that in doing so she will not be setting a narrow or reactionary or purely self-interested example, but on the contrary asserting a principle of vital importance to other nations and more particularly to weaker ones, which cannot prosper or play their rightful part in a new world order unless they are free to combine by groups for economic and political security.

But that is not all. The whole world, excepting only Germany and Japan, has reason to be grateful to the British Commonwealth for the strength and unity promoted, after long neglect, by Imperial Preference and mobilized by British family sentiment in two life and death emergencies. Its members are free to pursue such policies as they individually judge best in their unfettered sovereignty ; but that freedom is not assured to them for ever as human society is at present organized. The Commonwealth has set a precedent for international cooperation on which much in the future depends ; and Britain must not flag or weaken in that historic mission. The Empire and Commonwealth constitutes her paramount responsibility, and she cannot evade the fact that her foreign and economic policy will be major factors in the next stage of its development, whatever line of action its other sovereign members choose to follow. The Commonwealth will not break ; but its life as a Commonwealth will gradually be atrophied, if Britain puts any consideration except her own insular security above its strength and welfare.

If then, the British Commonwealth is heading, as I believe it is, upon the course best calculated to modify the fragmentation of feeling and interest imposed by over-jealous nationalism upon the civilization of our age ; if, furthermore, its example and support are indispensable, as I believe they are, to the freedom of all the smaller nations ; and if finally (as Mr. Cordell Hull's Easter Day broadcast indicates) it is of value as a cooperative

entity in the fourfold association of the major Allied Powers, Britain must abide with candour and firm resolve by the freedoms on which the Commonwealth's life and strength are founded. Her foreign and economic policy must both in consequence be bent upon the cohesion of the Commonwealth, not only in the interest of her own political system but in that of all free and progressive communities.

"Nations in the making are masters of their fate, but only for a time. Having chosen their economic policy, they cannot bid posterity repudiate the consequences." I hope that in this brief review of British economic policy as a factor in world affairs I have not entirely failed to make the significance of that true saying evident.

CHAPTER XVIII

EASTWARD HO!

The British Empire and Commonwealth has vital interests in the Pacific. Canada looks out across it from the north-east; Australia and New Zealand from the south; India, Burma and Malaya from the west. Russia will play a part of decisive importance in its destinies, for she is China's most powerful neighbour and very close to the North American continent at its north-western tip. France, the Netherlands and Portugal have territories abutting it. Its peace and progress are of profound concern to the United States. It is the meeting-place of eastern and western civilization and will put both to test.

I shall approach it *via* the Mediterranean and India—Britain's historic route.

The Mediterranean

All Imperial Conferences since the last war have affirmed that it is one of Britain's essential duties to ensure safe passage "along the great route to the East through the Mediterranean and the Red Sea." It would take a separate book of considerable

dimensions to discuss all that is involved in that task. I will not attempt to do so here, but will content myself with pointing out that the western Powers and Russia must be agreed on Mediterranean affairs if their friendship is to last.

Britain has been a Mediterranean Power for at least two centuries and must remain so if her Imperial communications are to be kept intact. The United States is now a Mediterranean Power, and will have a continuing interest in Mediterranean questions through her oil projects in the Middle East. Russia will assuredly become a Mediterranean Power from now onwards, for she is unlikely to accept much longer a situation in which Turkey can close the Dardanelles to her Black Sea Fleet. France will be again, as she always has been, a Mediterranean Power ; part of her political system lies in North Africa, and her culture has much influence in the Middle East. Italy's ambitions will be restricted ; but the Mediterranean is her sea, though she will never probably be moved again to claim it as her lake. Spain, Jugoslavia, Greece and Turkey are Mediterranean countries. Western civilization, to hold together, must not fall into quarrel about the waters from which, like Aphrodite, it took birth.

For British foreign policy peace and stability in the Mediterranean are vital interests. Being on my way to the Pacific, I will only stay to mention two or three Mediterranean questions on which it is especially desirable that the arsenal Powers, Britain, the United States and Russia, should agree and collaborate.

The most urgent and important is the future of Palestine and the Arab States. Britain accepted too heavy a burden after the last war by undertaking single responsibility for the future of the Jewish Home in Palestine. No question more clearly demands international adjustment. It is capable of settlement by that means, but hardly otherwise. The present situation is intolerable. The Arabs of Palestine are meditating reprisals against the Jews, appealing to the other Arab communities and the Moslem world in the name of Arab rights. The Jews of Palestine are also in a bellicose state of mind, and Zionists are conducting a powerful agitation in the United States. Civil war in Palestine can do nothing but make things worse. Britain can, of course, suppress it ; but suppression will not be settlement, nor does any settlement seem possible within the confines of Palestine itself.

The Arab nations are, however, moving tentatively towards closer association, and within some kind of confederation, however

loose, there should be scope for a solution of the local problems of Palestine and Syria alike. American interests will henceforth be affected by discord in the Middle East, and it is of very real importance that a common view of the solution desirable should be reached between Britain, France and the United States. These three Powers must in any case agree upon the future of the ex-Italian territories in Africa, and they have an equal interest in promoting and guaranteeing a settlement of the Arabian, Syrian and Palestine complex as a composite whole which is intractable by parts.

Jerusalem is a Holy City not only for Western Christendom and Islam, but also for the Orthodox Church. It would be well to constitute it an enclave under international protection, in which Russia would appropriately participate. How deep the reproach to Christendom as a whole if its leading nations fail to come together to save the Holy Land from further bloodshed and strife!

There are other Mediterranean questions which call equally for agreement between the leading Powers—security for the Straits of Gibraltar, freedom of passage through the Dardanelles, the control of the Suez Canal, and the future of the Dodecanese. It is really more important that the great Powers should have a common policy on issues of the close-knit Mediterranean type than that they should set up a grandiose association for dealing with all the world's unsolved problems, as though Peru were interested in Palestine or China in the Bosphorus. The Mediterranean has always been a test of statesmanship, and we ought in the name of common sense to improve upon our weak and rudderless Mediterranean record since the last armistice.

The Future of India

The future of India is for Indians to determine, but it will have its bearing upon international affairs. A self-governing India should be able to police the North-West Frontier without inordinate expense; but India is extremely vulnerable to sea and air attack, and she could not maintain her independence against a dominant and unfriendly Power established at Singapore without a Navy and Air Force much beyond her means. The war against Japan has made that manifest.

Independence is not a question merely of security against physical invasion. That is the *ultima ratio*; but the fact that it is possible and could not be resisted if launched is enough to compel

a country to subordinate its political and economic development to foreign control—to cease, in substance, to be free. As Lord Grey said of a Britain dominated by Germany from the continent, “she would have no friend but Germany, and Germany could have made that friendship what she pleased.”

Japan is the Germany of the Pacific, and no less saturated with self-worship as a country destined for dominance. If “Butter but No Guns” for Germany is the key to peace in Europe, “Rice but No Guns” for Japan is the key to peace in the Far East. We shall see when we reach the Pacific itself on this eastward pilgrimage that the co-operation of India is indispensable to the maintenance of any adequate peace system in the Pacific area. Without it Britain could play no effective part in joint protection of the wide region on which depends the security of Australia and New Zealand, the independence of the Philippines, the welfare of Java, Sumatra and Malaya, the free development of China, and, at the eastern end of the long chain of interdependent territories and islands, the immunity of Canada and the United States.

It is, therefore, not an Indian or even a British interest alone that India should be a freely co-operating member in the system of power required to guarantee the peace of the Pacific basin, from Alaska to Tasmania and from San Francisco to Singapore. It is an interest of all Powers desiring to promote the peaceful progress of humanity under the rule of law. Britain’s essential communications as a partner of such Powers in the Pacific area run from Gibraltar across the Middle East and India to the Malayan end of the Pacific chain at Singapore.

The internal welfare of India is for her own people to organize and promote under such institutions as they may agree to form when the pressure of war necessities is lifted from them. But India’s external relations are of vital importance to a wide range of Powers; and progress towards complete self-government in India might be assisted, even now, by discussion of India’s future from the external standpoint in the post-war world.

The leaders of the Indian parties do not seem as yet to have given much thought to it. India is a self-centred sub-continent, which has lived unto itself for a century and a half behind the shield of the British Navy. It will still be able to do so, but only by close co-operation with Britain and the Pacific order which will be set in being by the peace-desiring Pacific States.

With that essential condition in our minds, let us take wing from India and survey the great Pacific Ocean itself.

East and West

"Rice but No Guns" for Japan is still an aspiration, not a policy on which we are free to embark; but the events of the Pacific war have shown only too luridly what large-scale understanding between the great Powers will be necessary to make that policy of permanent effect. Like Germany, Japan is a carnivorous beast of prey fanatically set on dominating the jungle about her and making the law for the lesser tribes which inhabit it.

The life-and-death struggle of 1940-41 in Europe and Africa which prevented Britain from providing effectively for the defence of Singapore and Rangoon together with the disaster at Pearl Harbour has shown that the tiger cannot be caged and tamed without effective strength along the strategic line of mainland and island bases which stretches from California and Vancouver to Malaya and Ceylon. But the British and American Commonwealths are in this struggle together and to the end, and Russia will hasten the despatch of the tiger if she also decides to take a hand.

Lovers of Kipling's *Jungle Book* will remember how Shere Khan was cornered in a ravine and smothered by the terrible charge of a buffalo-herd, against which no tiger can hope to stand. Mowgli then skinned him and hung his hide upon the Council Rock for all to admire. Nations cannot be skinned and hung upon a rock. Even when decisively defeated, they continue to live; and the decent world for which we are striving must provide them with a peaceful future not unequal to their needs and powers if decency and peace are not once more to be shattered.

~ Neither Asia nor the Pacific is likely to germinate a third World War in the next twenty or thirty years. That more immediate danger will reside in Europe and must be neutralized there. But the Asiatic races adjoining the Pacific will have an immense war potential when India and China are fully industrialized, and western civilization must strive with them to make a world in which they, no less than the western peoples, can expand their prosperity and enjoy the warmth of the sun (or escape its destructive heat).

Success in maintaining peace while that new relationship between West and East matures depends upon real co-operation stretching into the future between the three Powers which will be chiefly responsible after this war for fixing the shape of things

to come—Russia, the United States and the British Commonwealth ; and it is hardly to be doubted that their relationship as regards Europe, which is the more immediate problem, will determine their relationship in other parts of the world.

Neither the Commonwealth nor the United States can afford to pursue a policy after this war which does not look forward to the day when the East will be the equal of the West in military power. Japan is but the advance-guard of an Asiatic awakening which will bode ill for civilization of our type if expanding welfare cannot be assured to all peoples under the regime of which we shall be laying the foundations in the next twenty or thirty years. Western man will not avert a conflict of civilizations in the dark forward and abyss of time unless he is able to show that all peoples can find worthy scope within the rule of law. There will lie the ultimate test of democracy as we practise it and of the statesmanship which it is able to produce.

✓ It will be fundamentally an economic test. But sentiment (I come back once again to Mahan) will have much to do with our ability to pass it successfully ; and also a reasonable allowance of time—for there are searching economic and political problems to be solved in the essential policy of giving Japan in Asia (like Germany in Europe) the wherewithal to live contentedly *minus* the wherewithal to rearm. The Pacific order which we establish must be a fair and generous order, but it must also be at all costs an order of power. Failing that, we shall find ourselves face to face, in Europe and in Asia, with unrepentant and embittered Shere Khans.

The Strategic Facts

The strategic facts which govern the maintenance of power in the Pacific are simple and clear.

The British Commonwealth must base its strength upon a line running from India and Ceylon *via* Malaya to Australia and New Zealand. Its two southernmost members have a vital interest in the independence of the Philippines. France and the Netherlands share our need of the line from Europe to the South China Sea, and should share our responsibility for guarding it. American strength depends upon a line of islands running from Hawaii past Wake and Guam to the Philippines. These two lines are complementary to each other, their security depending upon a combination of sea and air power. The British line

cannot be strong enough without American support ; nor can the American line be strong enough without British support—that is, without an order of power from India to New Zealand organized and maintained by the British Commonwealth.

Canada and Alaska are, by their geographical position, of vital importance to air communications and air power. But Alaska, the north-west horn of America, cannot be secure as an air base unless protected and served by sea power. Like Greenland and Iceland in the North Atlantic region, it cannot be supplied entirely by land or air. Whether by land road across Canada or by sea, it is considerably more than 2,000 miles from Nome, in Alaska, to Seattle—a greater distance than separates the western bulge of Africa from the eastern bulge of Brazil. Alaska and Asiatic Russia are, on the other hand, close neighbours.

French Indo-China and Burma apart, Russia is China's only land neighbour and is bound to have a very close interest in the form taken by Chinese development. China is potentially a great Power. She may become one in actual fact as this century moves into its closing phase. But she is not one at the present time, and cannot become one for many years. In the meantime, her relations with Russia may have a greater influence on her future than her relations with the United States and the British Commonwealth, both of which (except in the mountainous region traversed by the Burma Road) are geographically remote from her.

The Pacific Order

It would be absurd to attempt anything more than an academic sketch of the new order in the Pacific which will arise from the ashes of this war. Japan is not yet defeated ; nor, indeed, at this moment, is Germany. But whereas in Europe the foundations necessary for a stable peace are clear, they are not so in the Pacific and will not be so for a long time to come. All we know at present is that Japan must be deprived of military power and prevented from threatening the peace of the Pacific again. In that and other respects, no statesman can fail to note the interdependence of the western Powers who have interests and responsibilities in the Pacific basin. They must work in close co-operation for constructive purposes as well as for defence, in sure knowledge that dissidence will put them all in jeopardy as new forces arise and demand their share of power and well-being.

Whatever may befall, there is no question about the interests of the Powers abutting the Pacific from the eastern, western and southern sides of that vast area ; and the British Commonwealth has its part in all three of them. On the American side, neither the United States nor Canada will be secure unless they can count upon support from the countries which hold the southern and the Indian sides of the Pacific quadrilateral. In that respect the Pacific situation is, broadly, a replica of the Atlantic one.

Neither the United States nor Canada could have prevented the hostile occupation of Iceland, Greenland and Newfoundland in the Atlantic zone—to say nothing of islands further south—if they had not been able to rely on sea and air power based upon the British Isles. Similarly, neither could be sure of preventing it in Alaska, Hawaii and other essential islands in the Pacific zone, should they lose the support of British sea and air power based upon New Zealand, Australia, the British Pacific islands and Malaya. In Atlantic and Pacific alike, those two propositions have been demonstrated beyond cavil by the 1941-42 catastrophes.

The dependence of the Southern Dominions upon co-operation between Britain and the United States is equally manifest. "I do not think," said Mr. Nash, the Deputy Prime Minister of New Zealand not long ago, "that it is fully realized what we owe to the United Kingdom, and how the Commonwealth could not live without the United Kingdom."¹ But it is equally certain that without American aid Australia and New Zealand would have been invaded in 1942 by Japan. They are not, however, sleeping partners in the Alliance, for their valiant participation is contributing most substantially, with the bases they own, to the turn of events against the Pacific challenger.

Nor is Britain the only Power of importance on their north-western approaches. Timor, the nearest island to Australia, is owned by the Dutch and the Portuguese. Holland has a great stake in that area, and so, further north, has France. Britain, in virtue of her military resources is bound to be the chief factor in that area, but she could not guarantee its security alone. Without American co-operation her responsibilities would weigh too heavily upon her, as they did in the winter of 1941-42 before American strength had begun to tell. In the same way, and to the same degree, American responsibilities would exceed American

¹ Address to Empire Parliamentary Association, 29th February, 1944.

power without Commonwealth co-operation. The two great Powers must therefore collaborate with each other, and also with France and the Netherlands, if they are to devise and maintain a stable Pacific order.

The future of the Northern Pacific area, on the other hand, will be largely influenced by Russian policy and by Russo-Chinese relations, with Japan a major problem in the offing. On these it is idle to speculate until the war is much further advanced. All that can be said with confidence is that the closer the co-operation between the Western Allies and Russia in Europe, the easier will be the settlement on agreed lines of Far Eastern questions. Russian policy is intensely realist; and security in Europe, being the more immediate issue, will be Russia's first consideration. These world problems dovetail into each other, and the Pacific sphere can no more be dealt with in isolation than any other sphere of international relations.

The outstanding fact in the Pacific, as in the Atlantic, is the interdependence of the family of nations which constitutes European civilization. The western European nations have hitherto played the major part in shaping that civilization, planting it across the oceans, and making it the framework of the world we live in. But now that the great Russian people have risen to worldwide power and influence, they will set an equally indelible mark upon its destinies. They control a vast section of the central landmass of the globe; they have vital interests in the northern seas, in central and western Europe, in the Mediterranean sphere, and in central and eastern Asia; and they have passed from semi-isolation and self-absorption to a vivid interest in human society and world order.

At the same time new life is beginning to stir amongst the greater Asiatic races. They also have a long history of thought and culture behind them, and are awaking from the stagnation which has hitherto made them subject to the forces of the West, moving ever afield in restless discovery and endeavour. That period, five centuries old, is ending. All the world is one. Its peoples, whether more or less advanced in political and economic capacity, are becoming conscious as they have never been that they are part of a larger society and dependent upon the way in which it is organized.

The difference between eastern and western societies has hitherto lain mainly in the average of capacity which distinguished them. Both have produced outstanding men in

every field of thought and action ; but the western average has been higher and has produced a massive driving and pioneering force much stronger than the average in eastern communities.

Japan has shown how rapidly that distinction can change. She has challenged the West with its own inventions within less than a century of the day when Commodore Perry sailed into Yokohama Bay and shattered her agelong insularity. What China will be a hundred years hence no man can tell ; but this at least is certain, that western statesmanship must strive by every means in its power to avert another struggle such as the present one by establishing a Pacific order which is fair and satisfactory to all the Pacific communities.

In the address already quoted, Mr. Nash said that "it would be a mistake from the Commonwealth or Empire point of view if the United Kingdom as the United Kingdom came out of the Pacific. I think the United Kingdom ought to be in the Pacific for the purpose of working with Australia and New Zealand, which are the major bodies in that area." I would only add that all three British communities must work with the United States and Russia. In the East, as in the West, British foreign policy should keep that aim unswervingly.

CHAPTER XIX

FOREIGN POLICY IN PARLIAMENT

British foreign policy has generally reflected the British sentiment of its time, at any rate since Edward the Third led English knights and yeomen to France six hundred years ago. But up to the end of the first World War, though seldom losing touch with public opinion as it grew, it was actually shaped and directed by agreement between a comparatively small number of men. These were, to begin with, the chosen advisers of the reigning King or Queen : but influence passed by degrees from the Royal Closet to the great private homes, the London clubs and coffee-houses, and the other more or less restricted circles which met and clashed in the Parliaments of the day.

It was, I think, Gladstone who first brought foreign policy into the arena of violent national controversy with his Midlothian

campaigns against Turkish misrule. Before that time Whigs and Tories had been deeply divided on religious or monarchical questions which affected our relations with foreign States; but the main question at issue was generally a domestic one. Gladstone was therefore the forerunner of fundamental change, even though the Prime Ministers who followed him, Rosebery, Salisbury, Balfour, Campbell-Bannerman and Asquith, succeeded in keeping foreign policy out of party politics for nearly forty critical years, in which its character was transformed.

Widespread public discussion is now, however, the order of the day; and that is unquestionably right, because no continuous foreign policy is possible without consistent support from an effective majority of the nation. There is indeed no aspect of our people's ideals or interests to which British foreign policy can be indifferent. It cannot be divorced from economic policy; it should never make engagements inconsistent with the forces which our people are willing to maintain; it must reflect the prevailing sentiment of the British peoples; and it must provide, not only for our insular interests and security, but for those of an Empire and Commonwealth which stretches into every ocean and continent.

I frankly do not think that the present distribution of business between our various Departments of State corresponds any longer to modern facts or requirements; but I will not repeat what I have said elsewhere upon that subject.¹ The point of importance, so far as Parliament is concerned, is that the fragmentation of external policy between different Departments combined with the Standing Orders for debate produces an equal fragmentation of Parliamentary discussion.

The division of responsibility between the Foreign, Dominion and Colonial Offices (to say nothing of the India Office) is largely a historical accident and inconsistent with reality. The jumble between the Foreign and Colonial Offices in the Middle East is an outstanding example; but there are many others. Apart from all other considerations, I am convinced that the responsibility of Ministers to Parliament for external policy should be more clearly articulated, and, in particular, that the Dominions should deal directly with the Foreign Secretary. At present the High Commissioner for Canada addresses himself in general to

¹ *The British Commonwealth*, Chapter XV. "The British Cabinet and the Departments in Whitehall."

the Secretary of State for the Dominions, while the American Ambassador addresses himself to the Foreign Secretary. Everyone can appreciate the fact that this arrangement derives from constitutional development, but it is none the less a grave geographical and political anomaly.

The Prime Minister of the United Kingdom should have at his right hand a single Ministerial colleague responsible for the whole range of external policy. Most of the Dominions already do this and we should now conform to their example. It would broaden our approach to vital questions of policy in which the stake of the Dominions is equal to our own ; it would simplify inter-Imperial consultation ; and it would help Parliament to deal with the Commonwealth and the world as an inseparable whole in many crucial aspects of our external relations.

Honour in Foreign Policy

Earlier in this book I spoke of the laws of navigation in international affairs. Every well-found ship has also its internal laws and a code based on experience which governs the behaviour of the ship's company. It is from that standpoint that I approach the conduct of Parliament in relation to foreign policy, involving as it does the honour, welfare and safety of all parts of the Commonwealth.

Honour is a vital factor in foreign policy. We speak of "honouring our obligations." There is no question that Parliament and the people would always wish to do so. But they have by no means always succeeded in that endeavour, not from lack of good intention but for other reasons which demand investigation.

Failure has, I think invariably been due to one or more of three reasons. Either Parliament and the people have not understood to the full what our obligations were and what was involved in them ; or else, when the emergency arose, they were divided by domestic faction ; or, finally, they had contracted obligations beyond their means, having reduced their power to prevent or protect without adequate regard to the promises which they had made. I will give examples of all three types of failure from very recent history in order to demonstrate the immense responsibility of Parliament in dealing with international affairs.

There is, first of all, the case of genuine ignorance or misunderstanding. An example of that may be found in the critical week

preceding August 4th, 1914, when we declared war on Germany. Our undertaking to protect Belgium against any breach of her neutrality dated back to 1829, and its implications were not in serious doubt, though Parliament and the public had largely forgotten them. The military aspect of the Triple Entente between Britain, France and Russia, on the other hand, had never been publicly mentioned. Definite plans involving the despatch of a British Expeditionary Force had been discussed between the French and British Staffs, but knowledge of the fact was confined to a limited number of Ministers and ex-Ministers. Neither the Cabinet as a whole nor Parliament nor the public had any conception of the reality, namely, that we were bound by honour and interest alike to give military support to France and Belgium, though in the case of France we were not technically committed.

The result was a week of terrible uncertainty when the Government stood in greater doubt of Cabinet and party unity than of support from the Conservative Opposition. Monsieur Cambon, the French Ambassador, is said to have remarked at a critical moment that there appeared to be no word for "honour" in the English language. Sir Edward Grey's historic speech in the House of Commons on August 3rd, 1914, saved the situation, and there were only two resignations from the Cabinet on the ultimatum to Germany. But a lesser man than Sir Edward Grey might have failed to convey to Parliament the sense of obligation which was burning within him and action might have been delayed disastrously. It is also just possible that an earlier declaration might have stopped the German invasion of Belgium.

The might-have-beens of history are a fascinating but sterile type of speculation. All that can be said with certainty about that crisis is that we should avoid any semblance of it in the future. The risk of keeping Parliament imperfectly informed of the country's commitments will never be taken by any Ministry which cares for the country's honour and unity when peril is imminent.

There is, next, the case of domestic faction causing a breach of obligations. A salient example of that occurred in the autumn of 1922 when Turkey tore up the Treaty of Sévres and routed the Greek armies in Asia Minor. Greece, who was our ally, had several divisions on the Chatalja Lines, just west of Constantinople and asked leave to occupy that very important centre, explaining that her armies in Asia Minor had been rotted by political contro-

versy but that she could stem the Turkish onset at the Straits and restore the situation.

Constantinople was at that time still occupied by Allied troops and was neutral under the terms of the armistice with Turkey. The British Government thought the Greek request a reasonable one, and sent troops of its own to Chanak to assert its determination to stand by the peace settlement. The French Government was already, however, pursuing a dissident policy of its own (French delegates were at that time in Ankara) and refused consent to the Greek representations. The Greeks accepted the decision, since they had no choice, but asked for an assurance that the decision to bar them from Constantinople would be applied to the Turks in equal measure. This was fair enough, and the assurance was given them.

Foreign relations were being used at that time in Parliament as a weapon with which to belabour Mr. Lloyd George's Coalition Government. They were not the true ground of complaint against it, but in a war-weary country they were a serviceable political weapon. Mr. Lloyd George's Government fell a few weeks later in consequence of a meeting at the Carlton Club which had little to do with foreign policy. A new Government was formed by Mr. Bonar Law, the pledge to Greece was ignored, and the Turks were allowed to make a triumphal entry into Constantinople.

This was the first of the surrenders which marked our foreign policy during the Twenty Years' Truce and gave Germany her second chance of challenging European civilization. None of the Ministers responsible for giving the assurance to Greece, except Lord Curzon, joined Mr. Bonar Law's Government, and it may very well be that the new Cabinet had no choice but to dishonour that assurance in the existing state of public opinion. But the terms imposed on Turkey after her defeat had been generally approved by Parliament, and the dishonourable situation which afterwards arose would not have arisen had foreign policy not been used as a convenient weapon in domestic controversy. Parliamentary strife created the dilemma, and this country's word was sacrificed to purely domestic complications.

The third case, namely, the undertaking of obligations which we were not in a position to discharge, is luridly exemplified by the guarantees given in the spring of 1939 to Poland and Rumania.

On these I need only quote Mr. Churchill's prophetic observations in the debate of May 19th, 1939 :—

"I want to draw the attention of the Committee to the fact that the question posed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Caernarvon Boroughs (Mr. Lloyd George) ten days ago, and repeated to-day has not been answered. The question was whether the General Staff was consulted before this guarantee was given as to whether it was safe and practical to give it, and whether there were any means of implementing it. The whole country knows that the question has been asked, and it has not been answered. That is disconcerting and disquieting. . . ."

Having already discussed in Chapter VII the Russian agreement with Germany which followed, I will not labour the argument.

Three Essentials

I see no prospect of lifting either foreign policy or defence completely out of the arena of party controversy. Parliamentary government—though in my opinion immeasurably better than any other form of government when worked by people who are fitted for it—has, nevertheless its defects; and this is one of them. We cannot stifle controversy, nor would it be right to do so, since men of equal sincerity may differ profoundly on foreign as on other affairs. Free thought and free speech are essential to our existence. But we can, I believe, do much more than we have hitherto done to prevent our party system from dragging the country's honour in the dust and causing other countries to doubt our trustworthiness.

In the flexible constitutional system under which we conduct our Parliamentary life great importance attaches to conventions. These have been shaped like the Common Law by long practice and experience, and they govern our procedure as closely as would the clauses of a written constitution, though (again like the Common Law) they are constantly being modified by new cases and fresh experience. There is little doubt that British foreign policy would gain very greatly in strength and continuity if it were found possible to establish a clearer convention as to the way in which it is handled by Governments and discussed by Parliament.

There are two aspects of foreign policy between which, in this connexion, it is important to differentiate. One is the basis of the policy, which consists of our alliances and other engagements together with the power by sea, land and air necessary to make them effective and reliable. The other is the day-to-day conduct

of our foreign relations. For the latter no convention is desirable. Parliament must clearly be free to deal as it pleases with the manner in which a Foreign Secretary discharges his responsibilities. Question and criticism are the very life of Parliamentary government. They are kept within the bounds of propriety and convenience by the Standing Orders of the House of Commons and by the authority of its Speaker, who is the guardian of the House's liberties and the judge of its behaviour. His authority is formidably throned in the traditions of the House and he can always count on its support in calling undue exuberance to order.

The basis of foreign policy is a different matter. The ultimate sanction behind a foreign policy is war. When the State commits its members to any alliance or international engagement entailing military obligations, it is undertaking to use, should certain conditions arise, the most awful power which it possesses. It is promising to stake the lives and resources of all its citizens, their present happiness and future welfare ; and it is also pledging the honour of the country and inviting other countries to rely upon it. Amongst nations as amongst men, trustworthiness is essential to stable relations.

To preserve the confidence of other nations we must ensure that within the term for which it commits us an undertaking given by one Government will not be repudiated by another, and that we maintain a power which is equal to the obligation. It is clearly impossible for any Parliamentary country to guarantee those things unless the Government of the day is backed in doing so by the Opposition of the day, which may be the Government of to-morrow. Britain must not make engagements which she cannot be certain of honouring to the full.

Like every country, great or small, she has vital interests to defend which she cannot defend effectively alone. She also has principles and sentiments which she wishes to assert but cannot assert effectively alone. She cannot afford to rely for this purpose upon proclamations or leagues or covenants expressing the good intentions of a world-wide society of nations. The pre-war League of Nations served many invaluable purposes. Its Covenant set out certain principles of international conduct to which all law-abiding Powers should subscribe. It promoted international co-operation in many matters of fundamental importance to the physical and moral well-being of the world. It gave expression to an international ideal which we should do our utmost to foster in all our relations with other Powers. No

engagements we make should be inconsistent with its broad principles, to which all the British peoples subscribe.

But within it we must have engagements or special understandings which ensure that we can defend our vital interests in every part of the world with the help of dependable Allies. We must know what forces they are prepared to maintain, and they must know what forces we are prepared to maintain, in order that the common interests on which the engagement is based may be secure. We must, in other words, have military commitments binding ourselves and our Allies in the specific region and for the specific purpose to which they apply; and these commitments must define in precise terms the share of military obligation to be borne by each Ally.

No Parliamentary country can pledge its honour in this all-important field unless the Government and Opposition are in broad agreement upon the minimum of military strength by sea, land and air which this country is to keep in being, ready for action at any moment when action may be required. Without this essential foundation the country will never have a continuous foreign policy upon which other nations can depend. Its conduct of its foreign relations will fluctuate and falter as majorities change. It will not be dependable itself, and it will be left without dependable Allies. Let us face the fact that in the recent past Parliamentary vicissitudes have caused this country to fail in honouring its word, and will cause it to fail again, unless the main lines of foreign policy and the force to be maintained behind it, are agreed between the chief political parties.

Small minorities we shall always have; they are entitled to their opinions, but they are not essential to broad agreement. That is for the great parties which compete for real control of national affairs. Britain's word, Britain's honour is in their hands; and they will drag it through the mire if they do not learn from experience that on the essential basis of foreign policy and defence party politics should be barred. No nation will confide in Britain's word, if that word is no more than the pledge of a passing majority with an uncertain tenure of power.

The Edwardian Age

The critical years at the opening of this century provide an example and a warning which are much to the point to-day. All our leaders realized in the course of the South African War that the age of what Lord Salisbury called "splendid isolation" had

gone. Other Powers were overtaking us in the industrial field. Our naval supremacy was challenged. The Empire was deeply divided on economic policy, and the growth of national sentiment in the Dominions was banishing all possibility of a centralized control of the sum of British power. It was inevitable that we should abandon the isolationist policy practised since Waterloo in favour of alliances with nations which shared our interest in modifying the growing ascendancy of Germany.

We first made an alliance with Japan in order (strange as it may seem to-day !) to prevent the partition of China and also to enable us to concentrate our naval battle strength in the North Sea. We proceeded to an *Entente* with France which cleared up old controversies and made us partners in the defence of France and Belgium. We saw to it that our long-standing friendship with Italy should be preserved, despite the Triple Alliance which tied her in certain ways to Germany and Austria-Hungary, the threatening central Powers. This policy was initiated by the Conservative Government of the day with the concurrence of the Liberal leaders and taken over by the Liberal Government which succeeded to power in 1906. The Liberal Government, with full Conservative agreement, completed the Triple Entente by bringing Russia into the understanding between ourselves and France.

The policy, as the event in 1914 proved, was eminently wise, and it could not have succeeded if the two great parties had not been agreed upon it. The leaders of that day showed that foreign policy can be raised above party controversy, however acute in other ways. Domestic differences were violent from 1900 to 1914, producing two General Elections in the course of a single year, 1910. They included the struggle over Mr. Lloyd George's first Budget, which precipitated the Commons into a fierce contention ending in curtailment of the powers of the House of Lords. They ranged over the whole field of internal affairs, from education and social insurance to Trade Union law. They were marked by a swift exacerbation of the Irish question, which brought us to the brink of civil war. But through all that welter the inter-party agreement on foreign policy stood firm.

The period was equally exemplary in the other main branch of foreign policy, defence. The strength of the Navy was steadily increased with full concurrence in the country, which was kept aware of the growing menace of the German High Seas Fleet—in notable contrast to the concealment of the growth of the

German Air Force between 1933 and 1939. The Conservative Opposition was indeed stronger for naval expansion than the Government, and it had its way because the country, in that respect, was on its side. Only four new Dreadnoughts were provided for in the Navy Estimates of 1909. The Opposition demanded double that number. The country resounded with their slogan, "We want eight, and we won't wait," and eight were ultimately laid down. On the military side, Lord Haldane reorganized the Army and created the Expeditionary Force which just turned the scale in the last months of 1914. Here was a further instance of the fact that good leaders on both sides can prevent domestic dissention from bedevilling the country's interests in the vital sphere on which, in the last resort, its very existence turns.

But there was failure in those years as well—failure which must never be suffered again. It was not enough that Mr. Asquith's closest confidantes in the Cabinet should share with the leaders of the Opposition the knowledge that the Expeditionary Force was intended for use in France, that full Staff plans had been made for its use in that way, and that France was counting on the implementation of those plans, should Germany attack through Belgium, as the soldiers believed she would. Lord Roberts's patriotic campaign for National Service had raised the issue, but the Liberal Government had persistently damped it down. The campaign had failed; and when the crisis came at the end of July, 1914, neither the main body of the Cabinet nor Parliament nor the country had any conception of the extent to which, whatever technical freedom of action we might (and did) retain, our honour and our interest were in fact irrevocably engaged. That awful risk, it can be too often said, should never be taken again.

But in other respects the first fourteen years of this century present a model of the way in which foreign policy and defence can be kept above the dust and disfigurement of party strife.

Leadership

To ensure this is a matter of life and death, of saving the country, the Commonwealth and the world from further war, of preserving and extending the fullness of life for every section of our people in the generation to come. It is also a matter of leadership, in which the foremost politicians must take squarely on their shoulders the burden which leadership involves.

In the legislatures of the Commonwealth and the United States, legislatures which constitute the only pattern of full Parliamentary government still surviving the cataclysm of war, representatives are elected in the main upon domestic issues. Their own tendency will always be to look inwards, since the internal needs of their own constituencies are what most of them really know most about. They will therefore invariably tend to set a higher value upon domestic policies, expanding social services and the homely needs of their constituents than upon the needs of foreign policy and defence, which necessarily reduce the revenue available for the rapid internal progress that every electorate desires.

There is little difference between the parties in this respect at the present hour, since the rank and file of the Conservative party is not as free as it used to be from the weaknesses of professional politics nor as independent and well-informed as in the past about external affairs. The growing demand, much emphasized by the popular Press, that members of all descriptions should sit in the Chamber all day and every day, speaking as often as possible and confined almost entirely to a lobby-ridden world of their own, will not improve the quality of Parliaments, but is nevertheless too strong to be overcome.

The only effective remedy would be a drastic decentralization of domestic business to local authorities, which would need to be strengthened and enlarged—to “revive the Heptarchy,” as Mr. Churchill once observed in his salad days. My own belief is that bureaucracy will end by dominating democracy, and make an illusion of Parliamentary control, unless we tackle such reform. But the Mother of Parliaments is rightly jealous of her privileges and may sacrifice the substance to the shadow of power, if reformers like Mr. Herbert Morrison pursue their vigorous way.

In the meantime, and more particularly if decentralization is barred, the great majority of members will depend upon their leaders for guidance in questions of defence and foreign affairs. The more responsible of them are always inclined to conclude that “the Government knows best,” since it possesses information from which the rank and file are necessarily debarred. The less responsible are gaily unconscious of their limitations and pontificate upon world affairs with unembarrassed freedom from their party point of view.

Leadership is therefore vital. The front benches must

co-operate on questions which will mean life or death for the generation to come, and they must not conceal the reality or the measures necessary for dealing with it from Parliament and the people. They did so because they trusted each other in Edwardian times. They did so because they trusted neither themselves nor their opponents nor the nation at large from 1933 to 1939. The nation is too wise and its instincts too sound to warrant such treatment at its leaders' hands. When once the facts are set before it, as in the Dreadnought era, it has never failed to respond. An understanding between party leaders must not be used to conceal the truth from the country, but on the contrary to ensure that party manœuvre and the struggle for political power do not prevent both Parliament and people from being fully informed.

In the passage which I quoted in Chapter XII Mr. Lippmann observed that "the example of Monroe, Jefferson and Madison teaches us that while a true policy will win the assent of the people, the policy will not be formulated if the responsible statesmen shirk the responsibility of making the initial decision. . . . This was that leadership by statesmen without which democracy is nothing but the vain attempt of men to lift themselves by their own bootstraps." The United States owes much to the three Virginian Presidents of that time; and British leaders must follow their example if Britain, the Commonwealth and Parliamentary government are to survive the strains which will certainly fall upon them.

The Mother of Parliaments

There are two sailing-marks in particular on which that great ship, the "Mother of Parliaments," must be resolutely steered. One of these is the rule that we are not entitled to interfere with other countries' internal affairs. This is a matter in which foreign policy is always apt to be distorted by party and national sentiment.

The principle is surely clear. We stand for freedom, in the sense that adult nations shall be free to call their souls their own. "England," as Sir Eyre Crowe said in the famous memorandum which I quoted in Chapter XIV, "has a direct and positive interest in the maintenance of the independence of nations and therefore must be the natural enemy of any country threatening the independence of others." That is the life principle of the Commonwealth; and throughout the nineteenth century from

Canning's era onwards we stood for emancipation of adult countries from external control. Belgium, Italy, Greece, to say nothing of the South American Republics and the Commonwealth itself, owe much to British support in the period when Britain stood pre-eminent as a World Power.

But freedom means freedom to govern yourself as you will. It is perfectly true that dictatorships tend to war. But even dictatorships need popular acquiescence, and we shall not be able to prevent their recrudescence unless we show, first, that democracy is not effete, and second, that democracy is not so selfish as to deny to other peoples conditions in which they can thrive. It was on the weakness and unenlightened selfishness of great democracies that dictators founded their claims to popular adulation after the first World War. They will arise again if those conditions return. We shall not prevent them by striving to impose upon other countries a régime of our own choosing and not of theirs. We tried that in the case of Germany after the last World War—at what appalling cost in blood and sweat and tears!

Socialist and Communist ideology has always tended to believe that the horizontal division between classes transcends the vertical divisions between nations, and that peace depends upon uniting the proletariats of the world. Experience proves the contrary. The German proletariat created Hitler, and it is now more afraid of the Russian proletariat than of the domestic monster which it raised. Let us be clear that we deal with nations, free to make their own régimes, and let us establish conditions in which national freedom is something better than freedom to stand idle and starve. We cannot at one and the same time object to the Leninist policy of planting foreign countries with Communist cells or to Stalin's alleged activities in Poland and the Balkans unless we ourselves abstain from interference in other nations' internal affairs.

Our alliances in any case are made with nations, not with régimes. They depend upon the power and geographical position of the nation concerned, not on the domestic institutions it prefers. History proves that nations are brought together by vital common interests, however different in type their governments may be. We should still have need of the Russian Alliance, if Russia became a Tzardom again. Should France restore the Bourbons, she would remain essential to the peace system which we are seeking to create. If the basis of our foreign policy is to

alter with the fluctuations of internal policy either here or in the countries with which we are allied, it cannot be continuous and we cannot be regarded as trustworthy allies. It is the business of leaders to enforce these lessons of experience, and to prevent our ideologists from making foreign policy a mere reflex of our Parliamentary and domestic dissensions.

The other sailing-mark is the inescapable fact that the weight of your influence on any given situation in international affairs depends upon the power that you possess and are prepared to use. I have already insisted again and again that for the honour, safety and welfare of the country we must have power to execute any obligations that we contract, and must not undertake obligations that are beyond our power. That is just plain honesty and essential to the confidence which we expect from our foreign friends. My point here is a different one, namely, that moral reprobation seldom serves any good purpose unless the object of your reprobation knows that you are prepared to take action if reprobation fails. We are not the school-masters of the universe, though our Parliamentary orators sometimes affect that tone.

It would, for instance, have been wiser not to denounce Russia for making war on Finland in the winter of 1939-40. We understood the situation most imperfectly, and we certainly misled the brave Finnish people, who responded to our cheering and cannot be expected to appreciate our subsequent change of tune. We do not ourselves take kindly to foreign lectures on purely British affairs. Anglo-American relations, to take a different example, are not conspicuously improved by American denigration of the British Empire, although we know that it arises from misunderstanding.

It will be just as well therefore to apply the moral to our own conduct and to keep inflammatory rhetoric for our controversies at home. The prospect of genuine understanding between nations—which is what most of us in fact desire—would become much rosier if public speakers and writers in all countries would be guided by that common-sense rule.

Parliament and the Commonwealth

Finally, the Mother of Parliaments must fully understand that it and the Ministry it creates are no longer the sole advisers of our constitutional Sovereign, the King. The Commonwealth

now consists of six co-equal Governments, which are in fact and by law co-equal advisers of the King. Their individual freedom is in no way limited by that fact, as Eire's neutrality has shown. Canada displayed it no less by keeping a Minister accredited to the Vichy Government in France, when the United Kingdom had withdrawn its Ambassador and broken off relations.

The Commonwealth system is so flexible that it can tolerate many such anomalies without breaking down. But unity in all things essential to our survival as a Commonwealth is our common desire and aim, and foreign policy is the acid test of unity on which the outcome will turn. Commonwealth unity is bound to suffer if in the Mother of Parliaments the two front benches veer and tack on foreign policy for purely domestic reasons and under pressure of party gales. The commitments which the United Kingdom undertakes and the military establishments which they entail will be in every way as vital to the other nations of the Commonwealth as to our foreign Allies. If the Dominions are never sure from year to year how the Mother of Parliaments may behave on issues as critical for them as for ourselves, the great unwritten compact which holds us together must be steadily enfeebled; and Westminster, from which the Commonwealth drew its being, will be the cause of its decay.

Wide as are the tasks confronting it in the realm of social welfare at home, the Mother of Parliaments has no responsibility transcending that which it bears for the safety of this country, the unity of the Empire and Commonwealth, and the peace of the world. It needs a strong convention to regulate its treatment of these great affairs. Its chief political figures have worked as a single team under the rowel of war. They may part company before long. The party system is essential to Parliamentary government as we practice it, and it will be restored as soon as our present task is done.

But let them not part company without establishing between them that convention or code on defence and foreign policy which the safety, honour, and welfare of the King's Dominions imperatively require.

CHAPTER XX

THE ISLAND AND THE WORLD

The British are not a numerous people by comparison with the other two great Powers of the modern world; nor have they ever been a numerous people by comparison with the part they have played in Europe and other continents. They have made much history because their character and conditions compelled them to it, if they were to live at all. In consequence they have always lived dangerously, except in the complacent oasis of the Victorian Age.

Queen Victoria has been dead for a period only two-thirds as long as her own extended reign, and during that lesser period Britain has had to fight for very existence in two World Wars. Nor will the dangers which she has almost miraculously survived pass necessarily out of reckoning when she and her Allies have achieved victory in the present struggle. Her future will depend upon her foreign policy, her economic policy, and the maintenance of power behind both. It is idle to suppose that a nation which depends for food and employment as well as for bare security on its dealings with the world at large can afford to chance its international standing while seeking to raise its standards at home. That is why I have striven to show that a sound and realistic foreign policy, backed by adequate power, is as indispensable to the life of Britain as bread and water to the life of man. No tabernacle less than the world can meet the British people's needs because, as Chesterton said, they live on the edge of things.

But the converse is also true. We cannot keep in the world at large the position which our welfare and security demand if the domestic aspect of our welfare is not cared for as thoroughly as our relations with other Powers. If the nation is not sound of health, well nurtured of body, well educated of mind, it will not choose the leaders which it needs to hold its own in international affairs. Demagogues will have their way, defence will be starved, foreign policy will be shifty and weak, and in another generation all we have toiled and bled for will be thrown away.

The revival of our foreign trade, which is indispensable, will depend upon the mind and mood of the people quite as much as on the policies which we pursue, more particularly since the

policies themselves are bound, under our Parliamentary system, to reflect that mind and mood. If the British people are restless and ill-satisfied; if they are not convinced that our foreign policy and our expenditure on defence are necessary to the well-being of the country as a whole; if they are not persuaded that all they themselves desire in wage rates, standards of living, social security and equal opportunity for all depends upon a rate of production per man-hour which no other people can excel; if, in fine, the different outlooks of capital, management and labour are not so reconciled that national team-work prevails in peace no less than war, Britain will not regain her position in the world.

Britain's foreign investments and services have hitherto given her a margin of well-being derived from the achievements of the past which has provided for a higher standard of living than her actual production warranted. She has lost that in this war together with the margin of security which enabled her to detach herself from Europe without risk until some actual challenge had to be overcome. The Victorian era is over, and she is living dangerously again, as she did before the days of unchallenged naval supremacy and predominance in world trade.

Leadership

Leadership is indispensable, and genius in it can do great things. It can tell a people in vivid language what it needs and where it stands. It can strike a people's imagination and give a cutting edge to its resolve. It can hold a mirror to the people's quality and render them capable of even greater things. It can make the most of the country's resources by wisdom, skill and courage in the handling of its affairs. It can thus control events and put its individual stamp upon the history of its time.

But let us make no mistake about it, leadership is a two-way affair, since it is necessarily limited to what its people can, at their utmost heights, achieve. I have known at least two national leaders in the past twenty-five years who were manifestly too big for the peoples they ruled. Venizelos and Mussolini were both exceptional men, very different in character and in their methods of rule, but similar in this—that they aimed at a position for their countries which their peoples could not sustain.

All great careers are in a sense an emanation of the atmosphere in which they are run. Pericles would not have been Pericles

but for the Athens of his time. Lincoln was a reflex of the Northern States, just as Lee was of the Southern ones. Hitler could not have been the monster he has proved without a people to whom his barbarous aims and methods appealed. In a very different field, Shakespeare was Elizabethan England, though greater in mind himself than any of his time. If Elizabethan England had been different, Shakespeare, with all his genius, would have been different. He drew his matter from the thoughts, feelings, books and events of his age, and transfigured them in drama and poetry by their passage through his incandescent mind. Leaders must be masters of their trade, but they cannot lift a people to a greatness which that people does not in embryo contain.

In democratic countries, where leadership depends upon persuasion and rubber truncheons are sure to be turned upon their owners' heads, leadership is not leadership at all without true courage and (in the idiom of its age and country) a golden tongue. But courage however great, and tongues however golden, do not necessarily convince. Mr. Churchill made pretty good speeches between 1933 and 1939. So did Lord Baldwin. And Lord Baldwin's prevailed because they truly reflected, and did not greatly strive to change, the mind and mood of the country at the time. Democracies are democracies, and I am deeply convinced that in the end they will make good. But the world will not be safe for them when this war is won. They must choose good leaders, for they cannot lift themselves by their own bootstraps, as Mr. Lippmann wisely said. Yet the best of leaders cannot lift them unless they are fit and able to see that leaders who say hard things to them may very well be better leaders than those who say what is most comfortable to their ears.

National Quality

Leadership therefore depends not only on the emergence of sound public men but on the quality of the nation which follows them. If the nation is unsound, Parliament will reflect that unsoundness—in electorates based on universal adult suffrage how could it be otherwise? If Parliament be unsound, good men will not emerge; and in the realm of foreign policy and defence the results will soon make themselves manifest. We have not the margin of security we had even at the beginning of this war, and that margin was itself smaller than in Edwardian and Victorian times. We shall therefore, I repeat, be living

dangerously again. But we can surmount the danger, as we always have, if our state is such that leadership falls to good men.

In foreign policy, as much as in domestic policy, it is ultimately the character and quality of the nation that will tell. Foreign Secretaries must be able, far-seeing and courageous, ready to state the facts and capable of clear aims; but when they have done their utmost to expound and explain, it is the average education, the average judgment, the average sense of public spirit, that will be reflected in the Parliament on which their action depends. And in Britain, because our numbers are small by comparison with the responsibilities we bear, we cannot afford to waste a single talent, starve a single young body or stunt a single young mind.

Health from infancy, sound education from boyhood or girlhood, fair opportunity for young manhood and womanhood, full employment in maturity, and every reasonable provision that can avert the fear of undeserved suffering from sickness or accident or a penniless old age—these are things which we cannot assure to our people if our foreign policy is mistaken in method or inadequately backed by power. But they are also things which will condition our foreign policy and whose attainment therefore our foreign policy must always bear in mind. This nation is too small, despite its great resources, to be strong and confident in dealing with the world, if strength and confidence and a general belief that its wealth is fairly disposed are lacking in any substantial part of the electorate.

Foreign and domestic policy must in fact go arm in arm, if the quality that Britain needs and contains is to be fully mobilized. The Duke of Wellington is said to have observed that the battle of Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton. Perhaps it was, for the armies of that day were not recruited or disciplined on modern lines. But the battles of the future, whether of peace or war, will assuredly be won in better welfare clinics and far more efficient national schools. Those will govern the type of leader we choose and the policies they pursue.

The Growth of the Realm

Leadership, then, is a two-way affair. The *Führerprinzip* will never work in England in the sense applying to it elsewhere, for the people of England will not allow a method of government to be imposed upon them which robs them of the power to change their leaders whenever they so choose. Baldwin's England

was a fact, and so is Churchill's. They represent the nation in different moods, and both will always be there. What matters is the abiding England, the King's England, since kingship is above all party and all political change, a living symbol of the nation in its far-descended history from Saxon, Norman, Plantaganet and spacious Tudor times down to the present age—a symbol, too, which links the nation in its ancient island-home to all the nations and peoples over whom the King now reigns.

The history of this island people is hard to explain. England had less than five million inhabitants in the great days of Elizabeth when she threw down the gage to overshadowing Spain. How was it done? In his *Spirit of English History*, Mr. A. L. Rowse seems to me to make the least part of the answer plain :

"To what did England owe her astonishing success in the long duel? It is not easy to explain it, for the balance of power on the other side, a dominant position in Europe, a world empire, was overwhelming. It would seem to have been mainly due to the social flexibility, the adaptability, the modernity of the English state. It had no caste system such as prevented the nobility on the Continent from taking part in commerce. We were more like Holland: merchants and mariners had a high place in the national esteem. And rightly, for we owed our fortunes to them. The Tudors were very sensitive to the claims, and the rewards, of commerce. Elizabeth, like Henry VII, did not make the mistake of straining the national resources: she did what she did with an elegant economy. Her glorious meanness deserves to be inscribed in letters of gold upon the annals of her people; for it was their salvation. They were a small people, and not rich as peoples go."¹

And now we have done, or are doing it, again. But never since Elizabethan times could we have saved our souls alone. We have had great allies and should put them first in our affections when reflecting how we have spread upon the world—the world so vast and we so few.

Much we owe to the Latin countries, and more particularly to France; much we owe to Holland, which taught us many things from banking to tulip-growing and gave us one of our wisest Kings. We have repaid those debts in part; and must now, for the sake of our common civilization, repay them in full. But it is across the oceans that our enterprize has reaped its richest harvest, though often blindly sown. When once Elizabeth's seamen had opened the gates of the West, an outward urge came on us which, by action and reaction, has been the mainspring of our being for three hundred and fifty years.

¹ *The Spirit of English History*, 1943, pp. 57-8.

Spain and Portugal, France and Holland, Germany and Japan have sought to break it in turn. We were saved by our alliances no less than by our own resource and steadily mounting power ; we had, in fact, a foreign policy which, until the Twenty Years' Truce, eschewed the hazy distance and kept its eye on the ball.

But it is, above all, on North America that the fate of this island has turned. Chatham made the footing of the English-speaking peoples secure upon that continent by his brilliant handling of the Seven Years' War. It has been truly said that "the unexplored West was the Great Commoner's present to the English-speaking race." Without the strong support of Canada and the United States, where would England be to-day ? And where would they be but for hers ?

Canada now ranks fourth among the producing Powers of the world. Her resources are much greater than those of many ancient Powers, like France, which have spread upon the globe. She will get the population she needs, and so will Australia and New Zealand. In Africa the colour question raises difficulties ; but if Africa is not to stand still, her white population must be reinforced and white labour must come in. In the outward spread of western civilization the strongest forces of development have sprung from this ancient land, and they in return have splendidly upheld it in days when, without them, it would have been overborne. England has cast her bread upon the waters, and after many days it has returned to her again.

Tolerance and Criticism

How have we come through ? Enterprize, energy, character, the wisdom of experience, the gathered knowledge of many ages—England can lay claim to all of these. But so can other nations, whose standing has nevertheless declined. When these great qualities have been measured, they do not explain the achievement. The secret lies elsewhere. It is, I believe, that England has always been able to count in adversity upon more goodwill amongst other nations than her enemies of the time.

The master thread in England's history is moderation and tolerance, an ingrained devotion to the principle of "living and letting live," together with a most protestant determination to call her own soul her own. Sir Eyre Crowe was right when he said that "England, more than any other Power, has a direct and positive interest in the maintenance of the independence of nations and therefore must be the natural enemy of any

country threatening the independence of others and the natural protector of the weaker communities." We have made some glaring mistakes—not least that blindness towards our North American Colonies which Chatham denounced in his last speech in the Lords. We have left undone the things which we ought to have done, and have done the things which we ought not to have done. But by and large, with serious lapses, we have run true to form.

Not only, however, because we have had great leadership in critical times. Not only because we have bred imaginative builders and sent them out to make our history in distant parts of the earth. Not only because we have reared intuitive statesmen and let them guide our fortunes when they were low. The propelling and restraining influence has always sprung from the mind and spirit of the race, reflected in our Parliament as that extended its range of power.

Interest has played its part in it. We are a nation, not only of shopkeepers, but of bankers, merchants, industrialists, and trading pioneers. But we are something more. An idealism as genuine as the rays of the sun has always given a glow of honest and helpful purpose to our dealings with the world. In no country have England's erring sons been more virulently exposed and flayed than in this country where they were born. Our Empire-builders have always had to face a dark suspicion or a fierce denunciation amongst the people to whom they belong. The voice behind the Roman victor in the triumphal car was still and small compared with the clamour of disparagement which we have raised about the ears of men who served us truly in their time, seeking our advancement rather than their own.

And this strong power of self-criticism we must at all costs retain. We should not be where we are to-day if the character of the nation had not brought forth the leaders and pioneers and public servants of all kinds which it needed in State or private employ, and riddled them with criticism when it thought they had gone astray. To serve England in places of any prominence whether at home or oversea is a rigorous discipline which only the stoutest can undergo. Parliament has seen to this, and it must hold firmly by its powers.

The right to question Ministers in Parliament is not always wisely used, but it is indispensable to Parliamentary control over the Executive. It provides for a steady process of inquiry

and review which knits the Executive to Parliament and gives all private Members a power of raising grievances which would otherwise go unheard. The grand impeachments, like that of Warren Hastings, have faded into the past, and may never be revived. But every subject of the King throughout the Empire has means of bringing his troubles before the High Court of Parliament, where an answer must be given. For an administration which spreads so widely over the earth this is a troublous but healthy discipline which must never be relaxed till self-government in successive regions takes over from Whitehall.

The Mirror of Parliament

Parliament, moreover, will always be the university in which our chief political leaders must graduate and prove their form; and since it makes the leaders, it is essential that its average quality should be high. It is now only one of six Parliaments responsible for a political experiment which has immense significance, not only for ourselves, but for the world. In due course, perhaps before long, there will be more Parliaments still. All must work on co-operative lines if the experiment is not to break down; but the major responsibility still rests upon the Parliament at Westminster, from which the others spring.

It is difficult for other people to understand this experiment, since we do not understand it ourselves. In his last book Mr. J. A. Spender, one of the most brilliant journalists we have yet produced, described a conversation on the subject with Anatole France, who said that "most of the superficial ideas of the British were shallow and vulgar, but that their subconscious thoughts were subtle and profound." Mr. Spender relates that the great French writer illustrated this observation from the British Constitution, "in which he saw the reflection of many centuries of subconscious British thought yielding a result which was incomprehensible to foreigners but thoroughly understood by the slumbering metaphysician who dwells in the British body."

This is an encouraging comment from a most acute and probing mind. For in the next two or three decades our Parliamentary system will pass through a testing time. In fact, if not in theory, our Parliaments have hitherto on the whole reflected the political sense of what were called "the ruling classes," many of whose members had wealth and leisure enough to devote themselves to Parliamentary service with independence of

mind. Britain has been fortunate indeed in the amount and quality of voluntary service seeking no reward which she has always enjoyed.

All this is changing fast. The electors still like independent Members, but there has been a growing dearth of men who can afford to devote themselves to public service without earning the wherewithal. Allowances to Members of Parliament are already considerable and are bound to rise. Many Socialist Members receive additional allowances from the Trade Unions to which they belong. Politics will thus be more professional; and independence of party discipline, though much admired when National Governments are in power, will assuredly tend to fall.

Parliament will gain as well as lose in the process provided the state of the country is sound. Instead of representing a privileged class it has been tending more and more throughout this century to represent the people as a whole. It is now the people of Britain in microcosm, a catholic university rather than "the best Club in London," as it used at one time to be called. But the old traditions of courtesy and mutual respect are as strong as they ever were. All members are "honourable" to each other, "honourable and gallant" when they have worn uniform, "honourable and learned" when they are members of the Bar. In the established English manner, the content changes but not the ancient forms; and there is still an inward and spiritual grace in Parliamentary life, a national good humour, which insures that, on all but the rarest occasions, hard words will break no bones.

Constitutional Government

Parliament, then, will reflect the whole nation—its temper, its quality, its mind, its mood; and its paramount responsibility will be to prove that constitutional government can deal with the complex problems and dangers of the twentieth-century world. Constitutional government means, not only that the people chooses its leaders, but that it fixes the limits of the authority they can wield. It is a system under which the condition of the people determines how much the people's leaders can do. Those peoples who have hitherto practised it with success are but a fraction of the human race. The English-speaking peoples, who are its chief exponents, constitute one tenth of the population of the world. Amongst them Britain holds

the most critical place, the post where danger is closest, a salient in the line. Failure on her part must make the whole line insecure.

Constitutional government, as history proves, is always confronted by a two-fold menace—one from without, and one from within. There are many who have felt for many years that the latter is the more serious, because they believe that State Socialism inevitably leads to such a predominance of the Executive, with all its myrmidons and all its spidery power, that Parliamentary control is bound to wither and in due course expire. Only a blind earth-worm can fail to see that such a peril exists, and that it has been accentuated by the undemocratic necessities of war. It calls for eternal vigilance, which Parliament has not failed to keep upon it as the war dragged on. But in this country it is not, in my opinion, as great a danger as it might have been.

There are many reasons for this. In our infinitely graded society there is a powerful central mass with property in savings or in some other form of which it does not mean to lose control. Out of an adult population of about 30 millions, at least 25 millions have savings invested in Government funds.¹ The National Debt, in fact, is very widely held; and so is private property in many other forms. Our people also are constitutionally hostile to bureaucracy; nothing outrages and infuriates them more than the jack-in-office enjoying authority over his countrymen. Every public man who gets an unsolicited daily mail must know how deep that exasperation has cut in the course of this gruelling war.

But there is yet another factor now weighing in the balance, potent and entirely new. The demand for State action and aid in this way or in that was accentuated for many decades by the belief that the rich would pay for it and that their turn for sacrifice had come. Income tax, surtax and death duties on the rich cannot now produce more than a fraction of the revenue required. Out of about 30 million adult citizens well over 13 millions now pay income tax.² They are in consequence realizing that the State is not an inexhaustible treasury on which the many can without personal sacrifice continue to make demands. Social services will not, I hope, be stinted on that account, but the

¹ The latest figures give 7½ million holders of National Savings Certificates and 21½ million depositors in the Savings Banks. The two classes of course overlap.

² The real total is much larger since, for income-tax purposes, husband and wife are counted as a single tax-payer.

people themselves will certainly insist on controlling the authority which decrees that they shall "pay as they earn." Wealth has been drastically redistributed, and constitutionalism is much stronger in Britain because that has been done.

I do not believe therefore that our people will take the primrose path to national bankruptcy which ends in dictatorship—the path which the Germans and others have pursued. There is a gyroscope in their subconscious minds which will protect constitutional government against the menace from within.

The menace from without is graver. We have an inveterate tendency to relax into carpet slippers after a long, stiff climb. It is a very human weakness, and deep war-weariness must in some way tell its tale. But practically all the European nations have had far more to bear, and Europe will fare ill indeed if the British people turn their faces away from Europe and refuse to play their indispensable part in building its peace and welfare anew.

For no nation, however detached, is this a merely philanthropic duty, in which it has no interest of its own. For all, but most of all for Britain, it is a question whether self-interest shall be blind and suicidal or enlightened and alive. If the British people were to conceive again that they can have employment, good wages and comprehensive social services at home while neglecting to maintain their strength and influence in the international field, they would assuredly go down.

I said a few pages back that the population of England has never been numerous by comparison with the tasks it has had to discharge. That is demonstrably true; but it is equally true that the population of the British Isles quadrupled itself between the Napoleonic era and the second World War. It has long been unable to live upon its own insular resources, and now its savings are largely gone. Britain must therefore be powerful if she is to be prosperous, and her use of power must be of such a sort that it helps all peoples throughout the world.

If the Commonwealth holds together, as it will and must for the sake of all its nations, it will not be as an exclusive association challenging the welfare of other Powers. Britain is the heart of the Commonwealth; and it, with her own security, must always be her first care. But she is also a World Power; and she cannot maintain, much less improve, her domestic standards, if she neglects the duties which world status entails. Happily, a new awareness of that cardinal fact has been brought home to

our instinctive national mind by all that we have suffered and all the help we have received in the protracted discipline of this war. And we also know still better, what we have always known—that the greatness of a people does not depend solely upon numbers and resources, important as they are. The vital principle in greatness is the character of a people, a mysterious compound of brain, heart and will.

The Elizabethan Age Returns

Britain has lost much but she has also learnt much about herself and others in the last five years. I hope that the Allied forces who have served in this country have learnt something too.

Peace is declared, an' I return
To 'Ackneystadt, but not the same ;
Things 'ave transpired which made me learn
The size and meaning of the game.

Also Time runnin' into years—
A thousand Places left be'ind—
An' men from both two hemispheres
Discussin' things of every kind ;
So much more near than I 'ad known,
So much more great than I 'ad guessed—
An' me, like all the rest, alone—
But reaching out to all the rest.

*If England was what England seems,
An' not the England of our dreams,
But only putty, brass and paint,
'Ow quick we'd chuck her !
But she ain't*¹

I trust that fighting men of many nations, including our own, may feel like that about this ancient country when the fighting is all done.

Putty, brass and paint—they have grown dingy in the long struggle, Heaven knows! And much more than they have gone—the savings, the margin, the insular isolation, the automatic growth of wealth and power, the long immunity of the Victorian Age. But the quality remains. We are back in the spacious days of great Elizabeth with one marked difference—that the nation is no longer a young eagle in an island-eyrie gazing out on an unfriendly world. It has grown by experience, spread to other continents, and built up a new brotherhood of kindred

¹ Rudyard Kipling, *The Return*, written at the end of the South African War.

nations across the narrowing seas. Much has been taken from it, but much also has been given to it—and the ancient quality remains, constant in every generation and in every generation more widely diffused. May it not be of good omen that a second Elizabeth is now the consort of our King and that a third Elizabeth is heir-presumptive to the Crown?

AFTERWORD

It is many centuries since the peoples of Europe broke away from the idea that they should form a single family with a common faith and a common form of government. Great systems of order, as Bryce pointed out in his final epilogue to *The Holy Roman Empire*, are slow to crystallize, since they demand "a consistent theory of life, and a faith on which to ground such a theory" accepted by the peoples who are to live under them.

"The foundation of institutions that have in the past proved durable has been laid in men's innermost convictions, in certain fixed and settled principles, lying so deep as to be part of themselves and inwoven with their strongest emotions, principles which they hold as self-evident and which bring the life of each into harmony with the lives of others and with the universe in which they are placed. These convictions are slow to form and slow to break; it is a work of many generations. Seven centuries were needed, from Saint Augustine to Pope Gregory the Seventh, to create the mediæval scheme. It lived for three centuries; and nearly four centuries more were needed to destroy the principles on which it rested."¹

Since then the civilization of a divided and restless Western Europe has spread over the world, but her own peace has never been secure for more than a few short decades. One Empire after another has sought to give her unity by domination; all have been foiled by European character. What is needed to make her whole is not an over-lordship imposed by the passing masters of the machine-gun, the rubber truncheon and the microphone, but a new faith uniting by acceptance the hearts and minds of men. Religion in the form of an universal theocracy from which all secular governments derived their authority has long since lost its hold. The secular Empires, from that of Barbarossa to Napoleon's and from Napoleon's to Hitler's, have one and all failed to create an order acceptable to the rest of Europe because they had no purpose other than self-aggrandizement.

The French Revolution, it is true, liberated and spread new

¹ Bryce's *Holy Roman Empire*, 1922 edition, p. 504.

ways of thought which affected all Europeans; but French policy in the hands of both Napoleons was purely national, and so, despite long travail by liberal minds, was the policy of united Germany. The thousandth anniversary of the Partition of Verdun, which finally separated the Gaulish and German nationalities, was celebrated with much fervour by the Germans as early as 1843; and the German Empire of our times, from 1866 to 1944, has been the product and the parent of ruthless war against other members of the European family.

"To the south-west of the green plain that girdles in the rock of Saltzburg, the gigantic mass of the Untersberg frowns over the road which winds up a long defile to the glen and lake of Berchtesgaden. . . . There, far up among the limestone crags, in a spot scarcely accessible to human foot, the peasants of the valley point out to the traveller the black mouth of a cavern, and tell him that within the red-bearded Emperor lies amid his knights in an enchanted sleep, waiting the hour when the ravens shall cease to hover round the peak, and the pear-tree blossom in the valley, to descend with his Crusaders and bring back to Germany the Golden Age of peace and strength and unity."¹

So wrote Bryce in the early sixties of the nineteenth century. He observed in a footnote to a later edition that the pear-tree disappeared in 1871; I would add that the ravens have flourished. Four years later, in 1875, the Germans set up a colossal statue of Arminius, who routed the legions of Augustus, in the Teutoburger Wald. This might have signified no more than the statue of Boadicea at Westminster Bridge; but the creed of the crooked cross (which is a consuming faith to the fanatics warped by it) has shown again how little Europe has to hope from unregenerate nationalism.

The Goddess of Liberty, who took orb and sceptre first from the Universal Church and then from secular Legitimism, is clearly insufficient in herself to bring a new and stable order out of the chaos into which Europe has been dissolved by Germany's pre-Cæsarian ambitions. Such ambitions must not be allowed to revive; and that necessity must govern the coming settlement. But nothing great or enduring is founded upon negatives, and there is reassurance in the fact that other European nations have been developing a stronger European sense in the awful turmoil of the present century.

Of the three watchwords of revolutionary France, "Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality," the two latter have at last begun to take some hold upon the better mind of the European peoples. They have in truth been gathering strength not only as social

¹ *Holy Roman Empire*, pp. 77-8.

ideals, between man and man, but also as inter-racial and international ideals, binding people to people and nation to nation. It is significant that Bryce, who was not only a great historian but also a profound student of modern institutions and tendencies, noted in the Epilogue from which I have already quoted¹ that political thought was already being powerfully modified by new conceptions of the rights and responsibilities of property. He did not question the justice of this change, but doubted its efficacy in its existing form because of its unrelieved materialism, and added very truly that what men needed was "to find a consecration for power" different from that of previous ages.

That is our modern problem, and Europe is the heart of it. Science has contracted the material world. That part of Europe from which western civilization has sprung extended in its earlier phase from Gibraltar to the Rhine, and in a later phase from the Rhine to the Vistula. It was, and is, an amazing power-house of thought and action and invention. All its famous nations have contributed to its moral and material conquests, and it has spread upon the world with the beneficence of sunshine despite the clouds and storms which have disfigured it. It has, indeed, dominated the lands and oceans of the whole earth since the era when its ships and its ideas broke loose from their parent shores and swept over new horizons. It has also been self-contained, drawing to itself the resources of every clime and making history for itself with little regard for life and thought beyond its own borders.

That era, however, is now ended. It persisted in substance beyond the time, a century and a quarter ago, when Canning and Monroe called in a New World to redress the balance of the Old; but in our age the world is one, and neither western Europe nor Europe as a whole nor any part of the earth can thrive without mutual co-operation. The ancient home of Roman civilization, from Augustus to Queen Victoria, has in fact come to be dependent on a much wider sphere of power and culture which shares its origins though it has risen later to maturity. Russia in the East and America in the West must deeply influence the coming order, if anything deserving that name is to arise from the smoking ruins left by Hitler's insane and reactionary despotism.

Britain, with her world affiliations and necessities but with

¹ *Holy Roman Empire*, 1922 edition, pp. 503-4.

her insular security dependent upon the course of events in the European continent, is the key to this regeneration; but she can do nothing of enduring value without such co-operation from Russia and the United States as will restore the welfare, self-respect and unity of the old European family. That family is still the centre of world history. If there is no peace and order in Europe, there will be neither peace nor order anywhere. Europe has been, and still is, the master problem of the century, and no Power, however great, can hope for prosperous tranquillity within its own boundaries by challenging the independent spirit of the European peoples or by ignoring their moral and material necessities.

The virtue most needed in the new age will be patience. It is not a modern virtue. The cathedrals which embodied the aspirations of mediæval faith were not built in a day, and we cannot hope for a swift transformation scene after our coming victory. The task of the statesman of this era is to find the right foundations; if they can do so by giving practical shape and expression to the broader European spirit which has long been stirring, posterity will complete the edifice.

That holds as true for the future of the British Commonwealth as for its parent civilization; and Britain's leadership is essential to both. In the *Key to My Position* which was found among Lord Milner's papers at his death, that patient builder said that the work of British Imperialists in his lifetime had been to "keep alive the sentiments which make against disruption . . . against the time when its insanity becomes apparent." Such an opportunity is now at hand, both in Europe and the Commonwealth. They both need a positive and constructive faith, stronger than has yet possessed them, and it is our duty to lay the right foundations for it with prudence, patience and understanding. Western civilization will not survive the stern and searching trials which still await it, if its parent peoples in Europe and its offshoots in the other continents cannot work together with a larger faith and a quickened sense of moral unity.

APPENDIX I

TEXT OF A BROADCAST OF THE NETHERLAND MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, MR. E. N. VAN KLEFFENS, FOR RADIO ORANGE ON TUESDAY, 28TH DECEMBER, 1943.

That moment of cool courage in the highest sense of the word, the underground Press of the Netherlands, brings confirmation of the fact that in Holland many people are devoting their thoughts to the line of conduct which their country will have to adopt towards other countries after its liberation.

It will be for the Netherland people themselves to decide what this foreign policy is to be. For one day—and it will be in a not too distant future—they will be free once more, free to say what they like within the limits of the law, and free to determine their own fate.

If I say a few things to-night about our future foreign policy, my intention is therefore merely to contribute a few stones to the building you are going to erect yourselves. They are stones most of which are at this juncture accessible to you, although certain others are perhaps not within your reach at the present time.

I begin with this statement: it is my firm opinion that we are agreed, every one of us, that our pre-war policy of aloofness is stone-dead. But what is to take its place?

* * * * *

With a view to the future this point should be noted carefully. We Netherlanders can think of military collaboration only when we ourselves possess armed forces commensurate to the circumstances (we need not be armed to the teeth all the time if Germany is disarmed) and, on the other hand, if those with whom it is proposed to collaborate possess and keep in being a sufficiently important military apparatus.

When therefore General Smuts advises us to collaborate with England after the war my answer will be: We can think of this provided the British Empire, and Britain in particular, shows, like ourselves, that it has no intentions of once more going the way towards large-scale disarmament. This implies, in any case, that we cannot tie ourselves once and for all.

Would it be a good thing, however, to seek future co-operation with England under the terms of this great proviso?

You must build up your own conclusions; my task here is only to provide the stones.

There are a few cardinal facts.

In the first place, I must mention the German tendency to commit acts of violence against others. This tendency Germany has been displaying for many a year. It is hardly to be expected that it would suddenly show a radical change and turn into the gentlest of lambs. Germany is going to lose this war, and that will breed a spirit of revenge. The future masters of Germany may perhaps present themselves as if they were gentle lambs, for the German people has reached great heights of chicanery and hypocrisy whenever this suited its book. Do not let us be taken in by this. It is conceivable, of course, that Germany, having learnt how vulnerable it is from the air, will keep quiet for a while, but only for this reason, and not because it has given up its craving for violence. There is little in such a change that could provide a solid basis upon which to build.

In the second place, we must keep in view the fact that the morality of a large proportion of the German people, none too high since the end of the previous World War, has been thoroughly vitiated by the inculcation of Nazi doctrines. All that pretty talk of "justice is what is useful for the German people," the nonsense of the *Herrenvolk*, for which all others must run errands—all these doctrines have been drummed into the present younger generation of Germans and have turned them into a nation of savages whose official doctrine of salvation is nothing but the code of morals of beasts of prey. Let us never forget that a wolf in a cage may *look* tame, but that he will never really be tame.

In the third place, we must clearly visualize the fact that in modern times no nation can be militarily strong without having at its disposal an enormous industrial organization. In the Netherland left to themselves no such organization will ever exist. If we continue to stand by ourselves we can never make sure that in the hour of peril we shall possess the requisite armaments or shall be able to obtain them. If others do not know to what extent they can count upon us they will be reluctant to assist us with our armaments.

In any case, therefore, the choice is between isolation or joining other peoples of goodwill. This is a choice which you will have to make.

I need not say much more on this occasion about this question of future isolation.

But if the choice were to be collaboration with others of good will we should be wise to make it clear who are those we wish to join.

Enemy propaganda is trying to make out that we have been asked to merge the Netherlands into the British Empire.

You may put your minds at rest : we have been asked nothing of the sort. And if we were ever to be asked anything it would certainly not be to merge ourselves into the British Empire.

The British Empire is a community that is kept together by the allegiance of all its parts to the Crown—to the *British* Crown.

The State of the Netherlands knows no allegiance except to the Crown of the Netherlands, which, to the exclusion of all others, is hereditary in our House of Orange. There can be no question, therefore, of the absorption of our kingdom into any other commonwealth, not even in the attenuated form of becoming subordinated to it.

But although any such subordination or absorption is unthinkable, collaboration is far from being excluded.

What we shall have to ask ourselves, however, is whether such collaboration will have to be restricted to the British Empire. This depends not only on us. It depends also on the other partner with whom we have common interests as a result of our position on the fringe of the Pacific Ocean. I am referring to the United States of America. It is too early to say what attitude the U.S.A. will adopt at the end of the war towards political and military collaboration with other nations.

It is conceivable that concerning Southern East Asia, where China occupies such an important position, America's attitude will not be entirely the same as towards Europe.

But assuming that America is prepared to collaborate with the British Empire and with us—an eventuality that would undoubtedly be desirable for us—it would still appear to be too early in the day to discuss the form that can be given to implementing this readiness.

The main thing is that we may hope that, instructed by bitter experience and by a wider understanding, the U.S.A. may acquire a consciousness of the vital interests of America in the effective preservation of peace in Europe. Twice the people of the U.S.A. has seen that a German aggression against the Netherlands, Belgium and France is in fact an attack on

England, and I believe that it realizes more clearly than previously that with the fall of England a dagger would be placed upon the heart of the United States.

If things move in this direction we would see a strong formation in the west with America, Canada and the other British Dominions as the arsenal and vast reservoir of power, with England as the base, especially for air power, and the west of the European mainland—by which I mean the Netherlands, Belgium and France—as the bridge head. A development of this nature would indeed compel us to rely upon the Western Powers, but, conversely, they would also need us. It is difficult to imagine a stronger position for our country.

This formidable western block would find its eastern counterpart in Russia. Once Japan has been defeated, Russia's heart will be protected to the north, the east and the south by natural frontiers. But like ourselves it will have to devote its full and continued attention—and it will wish to do so—to the security of its own frontier on the German side. This picture brings, as it were, automatically to the fore the need for the preservation of good relations between the Netherlands and the Soviet Union.

If all this could be achieved, it looks in my view as though a long period of peace were guaranteed.

In this structure France must resume its still open place in the circle of Western Powers. Let us hope that it will rise purified and strengthened from the purgatory into which it was thrown three years ago.

That Belgium will stand on our side is not a matter for doubt.

It would indeed be inconceivable that in an exposé like the present, however objective it tries to remain, the direction taken by the thoughts of the man who addresses you, should not appear between the lines. Well, you have the fullest right to know this direction. Binding decisions, in the sphere of foreign policy or in any other sphere, the present Government will not take as long as the Germans continue to occupy our country—unless this were absolutely unavoidable. For events are not at a standstill, and it is therefore not always possible to wait for the day of Hitler's defeat. Up to now it has not yet been necessary to take such decisions. But I can give you the assurance that in this respect, as far as humanly possible, everything will be left to the free and considered expression of the will of the resurrected Netherlands.

EXTRACT FROM A SPEECH BY M. MIKOLAJCZYK, PRIME
MINISTER OF POLAND, AT THE CENTRAL HALL, WESTMINSTER,
3RD MAY, 1944.

✓Europe must be united if the future world security organization is to function properly. I believe that the nations of Europe have matured enough to co-operate within the framework of a European organization. I believe that the feeling of a European community has been born from the tragic experiences through which we have passed. Europe is already a spiritual entity and after this war must become an economic entity, harmoniously co-operating with the United Kingdom, the United States of America and the Soviet Union.

✓In the labyrinth of States and nations which constitutes Europe, practical solutions should always precede political solutions. I think therefore that the building of a European community should begin with the establishment of strong economic and cultural bonds between the countries of Europe. A common transport system in the air and on land, a European currency pool, and investment fund to equalize the differences in the levels of prosperity in the various European countries should provide strong foundations for political co-operation. Within the framework of this European community voluntary union between States of similar cultural and economic levels should, of course, be allowed. Their purpose should be to strengthen the European community by tackling problems of a regional character.

Briefly, our aims are these : a free individual in a free country, economic and regional unions, a united Europe as a member of world organization, and collaboration and security. These closely knitted links would together assure peace and the happiness of mankind. We are certain of victory, but to make it complete will not mean simply the crushing of Germany ; the plans for the administration of the territories freed from the enemy must be ready as well. Of course, different plans must be made for the administration of enemy territories and for those which belong to the Allied nations. The freed nations must be ruled by their own lawful governments as quickly as possible. A clear and unified plan for the restoration of the lawful governments in all the European territories freed from German occupation will act as a spur to the efforts of these nations and will form an efficient means of countering German propaganda in this field.